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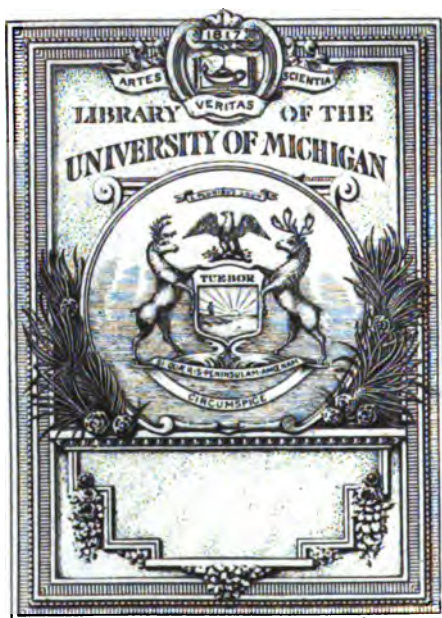
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# **EDWARD IRVING'S WRITINGS**

**VOL. IV.**



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THE  
COLLECTED WRITINGS OF  
EDWARD IRVING

IN FIVE VOLUMES

EDITED BY HIS NEPHEW  
THE REV. G. CARLYLE, M.A.

VOL. IV.

ALEXANDER STRAHAN, PUBLISHER  
148 STRAND, LONDON  
1865

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*The Discourses contained in this volume were written at various periods, between the year 1822, when Mr Irving first settled in London, and 1832, two years before his death. The whole of them, with one exception, are now printed for the first time.*

# MISCELLANEOUS DISCOURSES.

VOL. IV.

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## MISCELLANEOUS DISCOURSES.

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### I.

#### IDOLATRY.

**T**HE first great end which is served by a revelation of the being and attributes of God is to recover the worship and homage of His children from those idols to which, in the absence of revelation, all men do naturally devote themselves ; and the best evidence which any man can have that he doth rightly apprehend and appropriate the revelation which God hath given, is that the excellence and beauty thereof hath weaned him away from the particular idol on which his love was set, and reigneth supreme over his whole heart and strength and soul and mind. For as no nation hath yet been found so low and degraded as to be without their idols, nor any nation before the time of Christ so civilised by sciences or arts—for example, Egypt, Greece, and Rome—as to be above the same prostration of the soul ; so we hold that, since the coming of Christ, there is no nation, nor class of men, nor single man, let them call themselves Atheists, Deists, or Unitarians, who are delivered from idol-worship, neither can be saved but by the faith of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. This will seem a very bold and uncharitable assertion, if by an idol you understand only that which is fabricated of wood or stone or clay or precious metal, which truly is not the idol, but the image or symbol of the idol. The idol itself is the idea which the worshippers form concerning his being and powers, and the worship of the

idol is the subjecting of their faith to that idea which they have formed. The statue or picture is a revelation of the god to the sense, which the sense doth bow to and reverence; but if there be any affection of the mind, as hope or desire, or purpose of any kind, engaged in the worship—which, indeed, there seldom is in image-worship—it pays its homage, not to the sensible object before the eye, but to the idea of power, of mercy, or of goodness residing in the being of which that image is the symbol. The essence of idolatry, therefore, consists in the mind worshipping its own conceptions and ideas, however exalted and enlarged, instead of the living and true God, who made the heavens and the earth, and all the creatures which are therein. And in this sense it is that we asserted above that no nation, nor class, nor individual, are free from idol-worship until they receive by faith that revelation which God hath given of Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Into the consideration of which matter let us now enter at large.

All idolatry hath its origin in the very highest regions of the mind, being nothing else than the strong effort of the mind to constitute forms of being more noble than itself, before whom it may confess the infirmities which compass it about, and of whom it may seek counsel and help in the midst of the perplexities which beset its course. It is the natural form of piety and reverence and religion towards that which is higher than we, and springs up in the mind spontaneously, as society doth towards our equals in being, and command towards our inferiors in being. We see without us a sphere of power so infinitely above the power of man, in the thunder and the hurricanes of wind, in the agitations of the deep sea and the still motions of the starry frame,—which mysteries of power the progress of knowledge, far from unriddling, in its unlearned and ignorant conceit, doth at every step multiply the more, until every blade of grass and drop of dew is a world of wonder within itself, and we feel within us ideas of excellence in every kind beyond what we can attain unto, or by our speech shadow forth—truth so crystalline, purity so vestal-chaste, justice so unerring, charity so very vast, knowledge so full of light, speech so big with wisdom, motive so redolent

of grace, and life so full of blessedness. All which mysteries of the inward conscience, like the mysteries of outward power, so far from being brought within our practical comprehension by progressive advances therein, are widened and rendered measureless, so that the most conscientious, as the most knowing, men have by far the most clear discernment of their amplitude, and the most complete conviction of man's utter inability ever to possess them. These heights and depths and lengths and breadths in the world that is visible to the sense, and the world that is visible to the spirit, are without a people or nation to possess them, or to rule over them; and man, by all his powers, doth only discover the more his incapacity to shake these spheres, or enjoy these very pleasant lands. He cannot think they should be without wise government and blessed possession when he perceives all the inferior provinces of nature under their several possession less or more intelligent—the sea given to the fish, the land to the tribes of beasts, and the air to the fowls of heaven, the very soil of the earth to the creeping things, and all sheep and oxen, fish and fowl and creeping things, given into the hand of man, each fitted and furnished for his several masterhood, and likewise for his several subserviency. Perceiving this in the visible, and perceiving likewise in the invisible that the spheres are filled by various powers of instinct, from the lowest animal up to the sphere of human intelligence, and that human intelligence is formed to discover an infinitude beyond it of nobler things, where there is no mastery nor possession in the creatures, but, on the other hand, instinct to submit, reverence, and worship;—what is left to him but to people this infinitude with nobler beings, who possess the mastery and enjoy the blessedness thereof? These are the gods of the nations, excelling one another in the greatness of their attributes and the dignity of their forms exactly as the nations whose worship they receive excel one another in the extent of their knowledge and the refinement of their spirit. Idolatry is, therefore, the mind's business in the ideal spheres above her, as society is her business in the real sphere around her, and power or mastery is her business in the spheres below her. And the nation which hath not devised for itself an idolatry is at the lowest and

most hopeless ebb, having forgotten the faculties whereby the soul holdeth of religion.

Idolatry, therefore, hath its origin in the honest faith and conviction of the mind that there is a form of being more noble than itself, and the character of the idol dependeth upon the nature of that idea which the mind hath formed concerning the most perfect forms of being. Amongst the Egyptians, who followed after the arts of peace and the culture of the earth, those were exalted into the rank of gods who had been the greatest inventors in agriculture and the arts, and under whose government the land had flourished most. Amongst the Greeks, who followed after the perfection and elegance of life, those were raised to the condition of gods who had reclaimed the earth from the power of wild beasts and savage men, and laid the rude foundations of the state. Among the northern nations, whose whole soul was bent on war, and who viewed it as a bondage to till the ground or labour in the arts of peace, the gods were invested with the fearful attributes of power and strength, and their blessedness placed in the strife of battle, the glory of revenge, and the red cup of victory. And it would be found universally, if we could trace the history of idolatry to its sources, that the gods which the blinded nations worship were at first the deifications of men who excelled the rest of their kind in physical and moral power, who afterwards became symbolical of whatever more enlarged and ennobled thoughts men afterwards attained unto in that class of the ideal region to which each of these personifications belonged.

But while I thus endeavour to search out before you the origin of idolatry in the mind of man, and refer it to the high place to which it is entitled, let me beware of beguiling you into the idea that it is a thing good in itself, or at all to be tolerated by Christian minds. It is, as we shall shew in the sequel, at the best but the mind's adoration of its own most excellent qualities—self-worship, productive of pride and selfishness, and hostile to true religion, of which the first lesson is humility, and the constant progress is charity. And when the idea becomes embodied in a sensible form, no nobleness in the thought or excellence in the workmanship can abate

the debasing effect of subjecting the faith of religion to the mediation of the sense. It is putting the highest region of the soul in subjection to the lowest; it tenants that unoccupied region with inanimate matter, and by the baseness of the intermedium brings the soul from its soarings down to grovel in the base substratum of the senses. God forbid that I should palliate that most hateful and wicked whoredom of the soul, against which His anger is ever kindled, and for the chastisement of which He hath armed His hand with more terrible judgments than for any other of mortal offences! Nay, my purpose is far otherwise; and, if I fail not, it is a most righteous purpose, by searching into the sources of idolatry to shew unto the men of this age, who most do pride themselves on their deliverance from idolatry, that they also are idolaters in their kind, and must continue so until they reverently submit to take lessons of simple faith, and receive those revelations which God hath made for the satisfaction of those high cravings out of which idolatry springs. To open which, the idolatry of these present times, permit me to enter a little further into the natural generation of this evil principle in the human breast.

In the dawn and infancy of reason, when weakness and insignificancy of every kind compass us about, our parents become the objects of our idolatry, because we see in them a strength, and wisdom, and goodness which is ever looking with tenderness upon our ignorance and need of help. Our strong affections leading our infant judgment, and aided by the instincts of nature and the constant presence of the object, fix upon them as the perfect form of being, and we render to them that homage and worship without which, as we have shewed, no spirit in an inartificial state can ever exist. Hence in many languages the duty of children to their parents is denominated by the same word—"piety"—which is used to denote reverence towards God. Of the first form of idolatry God is not jealous of the child, which, by the first of social commandments, He hath instructed to honour its father and mother, while by many commandments, which He hath exalted into a visible form in the rite of baptism, He hath taken careful order to instruct parents that they should take

advantage of this early tendency of the infant mind to raise it to the true Father in heaven ; which if they neglect to do, retaining to themselves the honour whereof they are unworthy, then it cometh to pass that their children, as they grow up and discern their miserable shortcomings in the clear-sightedness of a single eye, looking far over and beyond their worldly character into the ideal of perfection from which their parents have flinched back into base worldly measures, their better ideas having no other form or emblem to fix upon, grow roving and wandering, and clogging the affections or even the humours of their mind, they make unto themselves idols of their companions, or their mistresses, or their own selfishness, and follow after ambition, avarice, pleasure, or some form of worldliness, till they love the very faculty by which they held early communion with the perfect forms of the spirit, and sink into practical materialists or practical utilitarians, consulting only their sense and conveniency.

When the intellect begins to develop itself, and to throw off childish thoughts, and we come to be introduced into the schools of knowledge, our idolatry turns from our parents, if they have made no progress in this kind, and fixes itself upon our teacher, or our favourite author, or the most distinguished living character in that science which we follow after. Or if we be of an envious rather than of a generous turn, it fixes upon some one of the illustrious dead, amongst whose disciples we rank ourselves, and looking up to him as the real form of that intellectual perfection of which we now are in quest, we pay our worship at this shrine until we see over him into another sphere, into which we look about for another idol of the intellect. And a book stored with the wisdom which we seek, or a monument of art embodying the grace which we admire, or an abstract science, or one of the fine arts, or the presiding genius of them, will suffice for this cold idolatry of the intellect, which is called devoting ourselves to the Muses. But when the affections come again into play in our manly frame, and the soul seeks about for those unions by which the misery of life may be comforted,—a friend closer than a brother, or a wife closer than a friend,—then the soul again wanders about for another living object of idolatry, and having found

some one nearly expressing the idea which it has formed of perfect womanhood, it abandons itself to the idolatry of love, and adopts the very language of worship, and is guilty of all speeches and actions which others call extravagant, but which really are not extravagant when you remember that it is not to the real person, but to the ideal divinity to which it is addressing itself, not affection but religious worship, which it is bestowing upon that living creature which represents its highest conception of being. As we grow older and acquire more exact perceptions of the imperfect creatures we are surrounded with,—as we grow wiser, and discover the limited understanding and weak character of every human being that hath existed, we turn our idolatry away from the sons and daughters of men, and endeavour to create some visible good, or invisible abstraction, before which to bow the knee of our heart and soul. And that which we fix upon is generally determined by the practical habits and customs of our life. If, like the multitudes, we live chiefly to the sense, and consider what we shall eat, what we shall drink, and wherewithal we shall be clothed, then the sense usurping it over the understanding and the spirit, obligeth the whole man to bow down and worship the sensible forms of things, and chiefly money, which is the mediator of this religion, through whose intercession all requests to the material god must be addressed. These regard the creature as the creator, for to them it is the creator—viz., that which creates the sensations of pleasure and pain, which they have chosen to call the chief good of life and the chief end of man. And therefore they bow down to the creature, to the kindly fruits of the earth, the sweet odours, the distilled spirits, the most pungent essences, the most beautiful colours, the costliest dainties, the scarcest rarities, and whatever else is new, curious, substantial, and exhilarating in the visible universe. Such I reckon to be beneath the brutes, for the brute looketh up with reverence to man, while they look down with reverence to inanimate matter.

When the understanding hath been brought to perfection by the training of our youth,—that is, the faculty of the spirit which knoweth and understandeth the creature,—then it sometimes asserteth its superiority over the sense, and maketh the

sense do offices of observation for its sake; but as often the sense getteth the superiority and maketh the understanding cater and refine things for its pleasant entertainment, and most frequently the two establish a good agreement and work to each other's hand,—and in every case, from the highest astronomer who scans the heavens and measures the motions thereof, down to the lowest cook who studies new comforts for the palate of man, they do become, every one of them who employeth no other faculty than this understanding of the visible, idolaters of the visible creation, some of the immaterial, some of the vegetable, others of the animal, and some of the heavenly forms of nature. I do not say idolaters of the objects themselves, but of the pleasures which they yield to the sense, or the harmonies which they shew to the intellect, either of the enjoyments or of the science, of nature's gift to affect the sense or her gift to affect the intellect, or both. And if you ask the greatest *savant* for his notion of God, he tells you it is the universal power, the universal motion,—that is, the thing which is calculable or measurable, which casts up the different aspects and carries on the different motions of the universe. Nature is their creator: for why? because nature creates those perceptions in the understanding and the sense,—for they are never separated,—the science of which perception they have agreed to call their chief good and the only end of their being.

Again, those who have turned their attention, not to the inferior natures of fruits and plants, and lower creatures, but to human nature, to men and manners, to politics, economics, and the other things included in the common weal of men, looking always to the outward working of the machine, and to the powers appointed to construct, govern, and adjust it, if they look not inward upon the soul itself, of which human society is but a bare function, it happeneth that they become worshippers of good society in one or other of its forms,—some worshipping merry companionship, others elegant society, others mercantile associations, others political governments, others administrations of justice, and others expediency or economy in general. These classes devote themselves to the social principle which is implanted in the spirit of man, and make an idol of that form of society which satisfies their idea the

best; or they go a step higher, and apply, by the understanding resting upon experience, to the general laws of society, and worship the science of outward well-being, or utility, in its various forms—police, legislation, jurisprudence, government, or expediency in general. If you ask such persons to give you a definition of their God, they quote you a chapter from the Unitarian confession of faith, saying that He is a God who hath created all things as they are, and governs them as we see them to be governed, who has instituted certain checks and counterchecks, and will raise all up to a general inquest, after which He will adjudge to every one just so much punishment as will reform them, and so set the world up again in a state of good order, that the machine thus readjusted may have another trial. Hell is the penitentiary of the criminals, heaven the city of the well-behaved, the earth the state of probation, the gospel the spirit of the statutes, and God the governor-general of the whole.

There is still another form of idolatry, higher and nobler in its kind than any of the preceding, which is proper to men of more large and cultivated minds, who are not content with the enjoyments of sense, nor the results of understanding, nor the well-being of outward society, but look inward upon the dignity of the spirit itself, regarding the visible universe as its mansion to dwell in, and the matter of the universe as the furnishing of the house. These look upon the attributes of spirit as spirit, its command over matter, its penetration into the mysteries of matter, its control over itself, its creative power of reason shewn forth in ideas and imaginations that have no outward form, its inward joys and distresses, its divine faculty of discourse with other spirits and most wondrous invention of words and symbols, whereby to reveal all its secret cogitations and unembodied feelings, and considering what a noble thing a spirit is, they desire, in the God whom they frame unto themselves, that all these qualities of spirit should meet in an infinite degree and harmonise in unbroken communion. They require Him to be all-mighty, omnipresent, omniscient, of infinite wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth. In a word, they take the form of the human spirit, magnify its proportions to an infinite size, and call this

idea their God; the spirit making a perfect model of itself, an Apollo Belvidere of spirit, and bowing down doth worship it. This is the idolatry to which we Protestants are liable from our metaphysical inclination to render all revelation into the form of abstract propositions, and give definitions of God after the rules of logic; and out of it have grown the school of Unitarians and Deists, who, not restrained by the authority of the Scriptures, as the other Protestants are, have put them also through the distillation of logical methods, and so perfected this idolatry of the human spirit. For I hold their God to be no better than an ideal perfection of the mind of man. They who rail against all the world as idolaters, are the idolaters of the mind; they worship an imagination, the Catholics worship an image; the one a spiritual, the other a sensual idolatry; the one the breach of the first commandment, the other the breach of the first and the second.

All these forms of idolatry which have been described above are the productions of faith untutored and misguided. Were there no faith, each man would be an idol to himself, or the man who comes nearest to perfection would be his idol. But the faith that there is a more perfect still than any one hath reached, delivers men from the worship of themselves, or one another, into the worship of that stronger, wiser, better form of Being which they feel to be possible, and cannot live without conceiving, and hope to be somewhere or everywhere around them. But until the reality of its existence be demonstrated, this production of their faith will have no authority over them, and can be the object of no worship. It indicates the natural desire of the mind to have, and its propensity to create, an object of worship. But after it hath done its best to purify and exalt its ideas, and exerted its utmost powers of creation to give them form and being, it is even at the best but the worship of self under disguise. For who imaged the conception? I myself. Who gave it form? I myself. They do all create their God, as the Grecian metaphysician boldly announced to his students, and went about in a workman-like manner. It seems blasphemy, but it is blasphemy only in the wording,—in the idea it is truth. Every religion which resteth not on revelation, hath a

god created by ourselves, fabricated to the form most pleasant to the sense, to the conception most consistent with the understanding, or to the idea most noble to the reason, but in all cases self-fabricated ; and, therefore, self-exalting not self-humbling, self-concentrating not self-enlarging, producing selfishness not love, breaking up society not cementing it, not religious, not real, not above us but in us, not of another spirit but of our own spirit.

Yet they are all, as hath been said, the production of the natural faith in a nobler and a better, a more powerful and more wise, and none of them come of knowledge which concerns the real existent thing, the matter of fact, the fixed and certain verity. They come of that faculty of man which bodies the unknown, and gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name ; of which faculty it may be said that it is to the mind what the leaves are to the tree, which inhale the life of the plant from the atmosphere, and transmute the atmospheric life into flowers and fruits, for in like manner by faith the mind doth gather in living, vigorous strength to act within itself, and profit by the outward world for the increase of its knowledge,—it being certain that if faith of higher things were to die, invention would fail, and all knowledge and art would stand still or retrograde, as in the East they have come down into the form of proverbial sayings and mechanical rules. There might be knowledge for use, but none would there be for growth. And even that for use would wear away unless faith, the great projector of the mind, were ever busy projecting its ideas and presenting its devices. For the advancement of knowledge, therefore, in all its kinds, the activity of this natural faith is most profitable, but for religion it is not profitable, except as it indicates the necessity of revelation, and somewhat prepares the way for its reception.

It doth indicate the necessity of revelation by demonstrating, in a thousand ways, the tendency of the soul to cast its highest conceptions into the form of life, and construct of them a living being, though conscious the while that it is not a reality but a fiction ; wherein the soul, by a holy instinct, doth play false with her sense and her knowledge.

She hath such a reverence for human life, that holy of holies in the temple of creation, that she will bow down to nothing which hath not the human form. Either in body doth she chisel out her finest fancies of a god, or in the workshop of the mind she doth the work, but still it is a form of the human spirit which she hath framed for herself. And though some nations, as the Egyptians, have worshipped the lower animals, which the Brahmins do still, think not, in this first projection, that it was the very brute that they meant the people to bow before, but some attribute of the Divinity thereby symbolised, as His generous nourishment of us by the cow, His glory by the sun, His pervading spirituality by the symbol of fire. And at this day, though the Catholics bow down to statues and pictures, these were at first designed as emblems of some high and holy saintliness to which they should offer their homage, though now to the gross sense of the people they have become, as in Egypt and India, real divinities. This universal tendency of the mind of man to give the object of its natural worship the form of a living spirit, and even to embody it under the human form, doth loudly testify that the revelation which is suited to them ought to be the revelation of a living spirit having relations to the spirit of man; and it doth also seem to require that this spirit should assume the form of man, to shew man that perfect form of human nature, that human type of perfection after which he is ever seeking to worship,—that upon this Emanuel, God with us, it may fix its single devotion, without the sin of idolatry, but to the help of the worship of the true God. I do think that so much may be inferred from the account which hath been rendered of idolatry, first, that the object of worship must be a living spirit; and secondly, that it must have some very close relation to the form of the human spirit, to the adoration of which we have seen that man is drawn by all his highest instincts, to which he hath been addicted through all his history, and from which he is not exempted in these highly intellectual and refined times, as we are pleased to term them. I think even more inferences may be drawn from the matter of this discourse, that as there are these

three things to which man's idolatry is directed,—first, his own form or make of being as distinct from all the other creatures, that is, his own distinctiveness, that which he calls I, and which is no other than his liberty or will; secondly, the created universe outward of himself, and the law of his own creation, which is reason, and the outward objects with which reason holds discourse; thirdly, the society of man with man, or the spirit of communion, or the laws of human fellowship;—I say, as these three must include all forms of idolatry—the idolatry of the will, the idolatry of the reason, and the idolatry of communion—it may, I think, be inferred that the revelation of the true God, in order to abolish all three idolatries by occupying the provinces in which they dwell, ought to present a threefold aspect, and hold out threefold relations to the human spirit, in order that in the Godhead man may wholly live, and wholly move, and wholly have his being.

So much, I think, may be gathered from the above inquiry into the common source and natural generation of idolatry in the soul of man. But into this matter I enter not at present, reserving much matter for future discourses, enough having been said to convey some most solemn warnings and most awful lessons to your mind, of which, in few words, take these following:—

First, That every man is liable to idolatry of one kind or another, nay, is an idolater of some kind, unless he have fairly and fully submitted his faith to receive the true revelation which God hath made concerning Himself.

Secondly, That in proportion as we endeavour to work the revelation which God hath made of Himself into consistency with our own conceptions, and, as it were, to cast it over again in the moulds of reason, we do so far forth mingle clay and the seed of men with the pure gold, and bring its glory into shame, its strength into weakness, and its beauty into baseness.

Thirdly, That poetry, and philosophy, and science, and sentiment, and every other more noble function of the soul, cannot, in their own strength, exalt themselves into religion, —can only attain unto more beautiful and perfect forms of

idolatry, but can never constitute over themselves any power which may be a restraint to wickedness, a help to weakness, or a comfort in affliction. They can discover the best in themselves, and worship it; but a better than themselves they cannot make, so as to believe it real, and trust in it as real.

Fourthly, That however much the Catholics and other idolaters of the earth deserve to be blamed, and loudly call upon our help, there is among ourselves, appertaining to our proudest classes of intellectual men, idolatries which are as fatal to the soul, and only more grievous because they are more difficult to be demonstrated to their miserable slaves.

Lastly, That religion itself—I do not say the religion of the Unitarians, which I have said is pure idolatry, but the religion of many orthodox Christians, who little think it—is often mingled with idolatry, and that according as it rests upon the conceptions of other men embodied in creeds, and resteth not wholly upon the faith of the Divine testimony concerning Himself.

Therefore, the sum of the whole matter, my beloved brethren, is this, that we should build upon no other foundation than that which is laid in Zion, and give our souls as a temple to contain whatever of the knowledge and faith of the living and true God may please to dwell therein; that we should humble our self-conceit, our infinite exaggeration of reason, confess ourselves ignorant, and blind, and naked, and, with earnest supplications, seek to have our emptiness supplied out of the inexhaustible fulness of Him who filleth all in all. This is the lesson, my fellow-Christians, which is borne into our own mind by the strain of the preceding discourse, and which we commend unto you, as we humbly desire to take it unto ourselves. The Lord grant us grace to learn rightly out of His most holy Word His most excellent being: the Lord cleanse us from all our idolatries of the sense and of the mind: the Lord manifest within our souls the true light of the revelation of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to whom be ascribed, as is most due, honour and glory, now and for evermore! Amen.

## II.

### IDOLATRY OF THE IMAGINATION.

**H**AVING formerly discoursed of the natural generation of idolatry in the breast of man, and of its various forms, sensible, moral, and intellectual, and of its actual condition amongst ourselves, I would now, before proceeding to discourse of its cure, enter a little into the evils which it brings with it in every form in which it can obtain amongst men ; a wide and a most important subject, with which is implicated almost every form of rebellion and disobedience to the Most High God, inasmuch as idolatry is the renunciation not only of His law and government, but of His very name and existence. And therefore we are not to be amazed that of His judgments upon the earth this hath always been the first and most prominent cause, that men had forsaken the God that made them, and bestowed upon another that honour which is due to Him alone. And when Paul discoursed before the most ancient and venerable court of Areopagus concerning the errors into which the heathen had fallen, it was not of their manners, nor of their philosophy, nor their vain-glorious pride that he discoursed, but of their idolatry, from which he sought to deliver them ; because he knew that from that error depended the whole system of error, and that if he could but shake the idol upon his throne, the whole array of his servants would straightway disperse themselves ; and if he could plant in his seat Jehovah, the Lord of lords, then would straightway follow a wise and sound philosophy, chaste and pure manners, a wholesome state of society, and a righteous administration of law and government. And even unto this day the cardinal sin of man is idolatry, at once the foundation-stone and the head-stone of the corner in that fabric of

wilfulness and pride which, like ancient Babel, this wicked generation hath attempted to build to heaven, in their great insolence against the God of heaven, to disinherit Him of His everlasting throne. Which will appear the more clearly when we shall have fully opened, as we now propose to do, the great evil and misery of idolatry, first to the individual who entertaineth it within his breast, next to the nation which alloweth it within its borders.

The source and origin of idolatry we found to be the same with the source and origin of true worship—viz., the soul's consciousness of her inferiority to the mighty works which she beholds created and renewed around her, and her incapacity to realise the holy, pure, and blessed condition of spirit whereof she hath the vision in her inward thoughts. She beholdeth and inspecteth, above her and beyond her and within her, more spheres of power and beauty and blessedness than those which are placed under her feet; to the former of which she aspireth with a thirst of reverence and subjection no less than to the latter. She condescendeth with a natural inclination to rule and govern them. And it is vain for any human spirit to go to and say that he hath no noble desire of reverence and worship towards the power that is higher than he, when we have shewn that from infancy up to manhood, and through the wisdom and strength of manhood to the decline of years, no one is exempt from an object of worship, real or idolatrous, either in actual being or in imagined and ideal being. Power, society, and worship are the three portions of the human spirit; the first respecting the inferior, the second the equal, and the third the superior region of being to that in which we exist; and it is as rare to find a spirit divested of the last as of the two first great conditions of its being. I say not but you may find one who worshippeth not, as you may find one who associateth not, and another who exerciseth no rule or government over the lower creatures. But the one is as rare and artificial a condition of the mind as are the others. Nay, but I doubt the existence of any such instance in any of the three cases. For though you banish a man from his kind, or the providence of God cut him off, like Selkirk, to a solitary island, he continueth to

maintain, within the sacred cells of memory and hope, the same human fellowship to which he was wont; and he will not, by their presence and usefulness, be brought to join in fellowship with the lower creatures, but walketh amongst them, in his erect and noble majesty, like unto a god. And even so I hold that no yawning chasm of scepticism can so separate a man from the objects of his faith, nor sink of selfishness or sensuality so swallow up from his sight the sun and moon and stars of the spiritual heavens, as that he shall be without an object of reverence and worship; for then he were without hope, and without desire, and without ambition, without fear of worse or care of better, or any other of those faculties which constitute the life of the mind to be distinct from the life of matter, and which all hold of the sphere which is above us, and have reference to the Being which is higher than we. Now observe that idolatry doth people this the highest and superlative region of the mind, the region not of knowledge but of faith, with imaginary beings, who hold it not by any demonstration made to man of their existence and power, but by a constitution which he hath given them by the creative faculty of his own imagination. Faith calls for objects, and the spirit declares she must have objects for her faith, or else lose the nobler part of her being; and the spirit, unable to find the realities which faith requires, calls upon the imagination to body forth some of her infinite forms, and present them to faith for her entertainment and satisfaction. And if the imagination hath framed these idols with a diligent respect unto the noblest forms of the human spirit whereof she hath any consciousness, and if she have gathered in the attributes of every better one which the world hath held, and presented as it were an idealised portrait, or series of portraits, of the best possible forms of humanity, she hath done her best to satisfy faith, and to improve the condition of the whole man. This, doubtless, is the noblest form of idolatry, and therefore we shall begin with the examination of its effects upon the spirit of man.

I observe, then, that it cannot by any means raise man above himself. It is the mind turning upon its own axis, but making no progress into a higher condition of being.

For these imaginations and creations of superior powers are but remembered forms of what man hath been, or conceived forms of what he may become. They are helps to the ambition, and objects to the imitation of the mind, which another human mind hath set before its fellows, as its own labours in the unknown and undiscovered sphere of our ideas. They may serve, like the machinery of the poet, to please the imagination, or, like the creations of romance, to inflame the ambition of the mind; but never can faith admit them into the region of realities, so as to yield reverence to their commands, or to place trust upon their promises. The moment it did so, the whole man were crazed and disjointed, like the Spanish knight of romance, who came into the condition of believing his imagination, and following its objects as realities. Faith cannot, must not, dare not, yield herself to the imagination of the mind, any more than to the intellect of the mind. If she yield to the intellect, her sceptre is broken, and she is faith no longer; if she yield to the imagination, she is bewitched and befooled, and sold into slavery beyond redemption. Faith must not be possible in the intellect, and therefore not distract our knowledge; and to the imagination she is a guide and conductor. The moment any one brings home the narrative of things which no one but himself hath seen, faith employs herself upon the matter, and perceiving no impossibility in the thing, nor no inconsistency with what she presently knows, she hath no grounds of doubt save what may be found in the person of him who brings the narrative, which is a question of man's credibility, not of the principles of believing; but no one of a sound mind would call his imagination to help him to a true faith of the matter, or suppose that because he can have an image of it in his mind, it is credible on that account. Then might you believe all monsters and chimeras true, all giants and dwarfs, all elves and fairies, with every spirit which dwells in air, earth, fire, or in fens, bogs, and waters. All poetry, all fiction, were in that case believed which is imagined by the writer, and by him described to the imagination of his readers. Nay, imagination must retire till faith hath come to a decision, and when she

hath decided to believe, the imagination may occupy the ground, to construct further beautiful structures by which to invite the later and more reserved faculties of the soul. Therefore I say that these idols which imagination constituteth for the use of faith, true faith never accepteth, so as to yield them any authority, or forego for them any interest, or yield to shape according to their will any of her courses. When Columbus conceived the idea of a western world, it was an imagination; and yet not altogether an imagination, for he had some grounds of faith which his great mind could embody into an opinion. But to the courts of Europe it was an imagination, and therefore he wandered in vain to get any help for his project. No one would adventure upon it the worth of a stiver. When at length one court, out of pity or personal regard, yielded him a ship, it was still an imagination to his crew, who were always ready to mutiny upon their commander; so much doth it repent one to sacrifice anything, however small, to any imagination: for these men were sacrificing no money, being regularly hired, nor free will of their own, being under command of their king; yet were they ready to mutiny against the very life of Columbus, out of the mere shame of yielding to an imagination. But when Columbus returned with tokens and evidences of another world, then it became a belief in the mind of Europe; and forthwith all nations, and private persons who had the means, set on foot large and liberal expeditions, and made all sacrifices in the same cause, to which heretofore they would not risk the value of a stiver. Such is the mighty difference upon the mind and conduct of men between an imagination and a belief. So I hold it to be with respect to the case in hand. That higher region of power and blessedness whereof the soul is conscious beyond her sphere, and whereof she seeks to discover the possession, that she may yield to it the reverence and worship for which she feels herself to be constituted, in the want of which her fair-proportioned being is crippled and disabled, is in the same condition to her as to our fathers before Columbus was the great ocean which stretched from the western shores of Europe and the islands of the blessed, half round the globe to the shores

of the Eastern Indies. And he who, by his imagination, doth people those upper spheres with forms of being however powerful, wise, and blessed, doth no more to persuade his brethren of their reality, or interest others in their existence, or find for them objects of reverence and worship, than would the chart-maker of those days have induced our fathers to send out embassies, risk adventures, or appoint colonies, by filling from his own imagination the blank of ocean with islands and continents and nations, and publishing it to the world. He might be taken up for a deceiver, or despised as a liar, or let go loose as a poor harmless visionary, but certes he would not be believed on, because with his pen he had scribbled over a blank part of the chart with the outlines of imagined lands. Go into the cell of a madman and examine its walls; you shall find it written over with words and emblems and signs, which to you are significant of his madness, but to him significant of his real condition; and there is all the difference between a sane man and a madman, that the one believes his imaginations to be realities, the other doth not. And if no sane man believeth his own imaginations to be realities, shall others believe them for realities? Then are they twice mad to believe in those imaginations which have not even the slender privilege of belonging to themselves, but have been received from another, who himself was a madman if he believed them.

There is need of no further discourse, therefore, to prove how totally ineffectual is the imagination of man to fill the circumjacent infinitude of the higher and more blessed spheres, so as to secure for them any reverence or worship, or induce over the mind any of the elevations or obligations of religion. They can do no more than Shakespeare hath done, better than any one, in the superstitions of his plays, which I mention here, as it may be thought a little out of place, because many of you doubtless have read them, in order to question you, if when your imagination hath been filled with the fairy figures in the "Winter's Evening Tale," with the airy and earthy creatures in the "Tempest," or the hell-commissioned sisters in the tragedy of the Scottish king, you were disposed thereafter to look for creatures sporting in the fairy rings and

elfin knolls under the cold moonbeam, to hear the harp of Ariel in the air, or sacrifice an owl or some other unclean bird to propitiate the terrific powers of the three weird sisters who preside over the destinies of men? If you answer me nay, then I tell you that as little worship or obedience will ye yield to the god or gods with which the imagination of man hath peopled the infinite fields of power and blessedness which lie around the narrow sphere which we possess.

Accordingly, the idolatries of the nations did not rest upon the imaginations of the poets, but upon the traditions of past ages, the books of the Sibyl, the unrevealed secrecies of the mysteries, the hieroglyphics of the priests, and whatever else was embodied in their religious books, or given forth by their oracles as the revelation of God. They believed that such things had been revealed as were written in their fables, and being in the infancy of reason, both intellectual and moral, they saw not the inconsistency of these revelations with one another, or their insufficiency to regenerate the natural reason of man, much less to exalt it to higher refinements and reveal to it new powers over its own wellbeing. Neither Zoroaster, nor Numa, nor Mohammed, nor any other who have misled the nations, profess to come by their systems from the devices or imaginations of their own brain, but to have derived them from secret revelations made to them by those powers to whom they sought to gather in the reverence and obedience of men. It hath been left to this age to think they can be religious by nature without any revelation, nay, to go to and unmake this revelation, untwist all its harmonies of spirit, interpret all its mysteries, and reduce to reason all its revelations, and so despoil the superiority of the Being which human nature longed to worship,—in order to worship Him, make His worship less, and so cut the knot which all wise men had been endeavouring to loose since the world began, and which the Lion of the tribe of Judah alone had the wisdom and the power to unloose.

Such then, briefly, is the state of the case with those who take help to their faith from their imagination, and constitute for themselves a god according to the creations of their own mind; in which condition of idolatry we shewed, in our last

discourse, that the men of science and the economists, the materialists and not a few of the spiritual philosophers, were found. They please themselves with the idea that they have a religion in their hearts, and that they have a notion of God infinitely elevated above the vulgar. It is but a pleasant delusion. It is the idea of their own minds to which they are yielding homage, and the mind which hath conceived those ideas is the god of their idolatry. We cannot be religious until we believe in a Being above ourselves, which imagination cannot accomplish. The crew of a ship by obeying the captain of the ship, or the soldiers of an army by obeying their general, or the servants of a house by obeying their master, are not therefore pious and religious towards God, but observant of their duty towards man: no more are the faculties of the soul to be pronounced religious towards God when they serve the master faculty, or the actions of the life to be called holy because they are directed according to our best judgment of things. The mind is well disciplined within itself, the life is well ordered, but neither is the one nor the other impregnated with the least spirit of religion, until the authority of a higher than ourselves be acknowledged, and His glory consulted for in the discipline of our spirits and the economy of our lives. Those classes, therefore, who make their own god are purely without any religion whatever; all the good of religion they want—all the evils of no religion they are obnoxious to. The upper relations of their being are abolished—reverence is not—humility is not—self-denial for the Lord's sake is not. The redemption of the soul is not, and its regeneration is not. Heavenly-mindedness and Christian charity are not. The will is still wildly insubordinate—the conscience unenlightened—the affections wandering as they list—the whole soul in darkness—no faith—no heavenly hope—no high and holy aspirations. A mind more concentrated with itself, more powerful, more terrible, more solitary, more moody, more ungovernable;—honouring itself as God, enjoying its fancies as heaven, having its delights with its own faculties, contemptuous of the groundlings of the world, unmeek, unmerciful. Ah, they talk of the bigotry of churchmen, and they have reason to exclaim against the

bigotry of sectarian churchmen ; but the bigotry of scepticism, the contemptuous sneer of scientific and liberal minds, and the fell swoop of their arm when, in a neighbouring country, it was loosed for a while, and when it shall be loosed again,—from it none but the Lord shall be able to deliver His Church.

But I pause in this detail to address myself to another form of this idolatry, which prevails among those professing the gospel, who do not imagine their gods by the creative faculty of their minds, but, adopting the revelation as it is given by Christ and the apostles, go to dress and prune it by the hand of reason. Whereby they do gain a rational religion, they gain deliverance from all religion. No religion, no reverence, no worship,—behold what they gain! They fancy that they have a religion of reason, but they have purely no religion whatever, if by religion you understand the obligation of some power higher than reason herself. For reason can bind reason to nothing, but that which reason pleaseth. So that there is nothing over reason to rebuke her, to guide her, to instruct her. Each man is a god unto himself. The soul hath liberty from restraint. And the soul will take its liberty. And the consequence must necessarily be licentiousness in private life, radicalism towards social institutions, and atheism towards the revelation of God. I do not say that things have yet advanced into this state with those amongst ourselves who have subjected reason to revelation ; but that it will come into this state is inevitable, for when a man hath loosed himself so far as to put what he believes the message of God under the feet of his natural reason, which is himself, will he stop at any ordinance of man to give it a reverence further than suits his advantage? or will he control himself further than seemeth to himself good, who hath refused to be controlled of God? As soon might a man smite his father on the face, and be withheld from smiting his menial servant. And, for my part, the truth being spoken, I do ever find it so that those who have subjected faith to reason, have subjected law to utility, and have subjected all orthodox opinions to overweening self-conceit, and live liberally and loosely, each man after the natural course of his mind, denying our original corruption, which all religions are founded on ; deny-

ing the need of redemption and regeneration, to which all religions have less or more a regard; denying a spiritual life distinct from, yet including social duties, and they hesitate concerning the immateriality and immortality of the soul; in short, in a very few years, they have run a course of libertinism in opinion which must draw in with it, as the age will bear, libertinism of practice, and dissolution of those venerable bonds and covenants which bind man to man, and constitute the strong and long-enduring framework of society.

This is only another form of the same idolatry, agreeing with the former in setting a faculty of the human mind over the word of God; but differing from it as to the faculty which they employ—not the creative, but the critical faculty—not the imagination, but the judgment. They accept the record of God upon condition that it will stand to reason, and if it consist not with reason, they take leave to reject it. This is the idolatry of reason—the other of imagination. And mark its effects. If it were reason in a state of full development and perfect culture to which these idolaters of reason brought revelation, I should have little fear for the result; because so far from rejecting, I believe that reason, being fairly appealed to, would embrace the truths of revelation from perceiving that she was wholly comprehended by them, while there was much beyond, into the fulness of which she might gradually come by the help of present faith. But it is not reason in a mature and sufficient form to which they make the appeal, but reason as it is in every man who takes the subject into his thoughts: in one overclouded by sense, in another scorched up by lava torrents of passion, in another intoxicated with the fumes of pride and vanity—in all, nothing better than the common sense which is necessary for guiding their worldly affairs with discretion and success. Was there ever such a prostitution heard of as to call an assembly together from the four quarters of this or any other city, and submit to every man's freethinking the great revelations of the incomprehensible God, which were given for the government of every heart and the salvation of every soul? Of all ostracisms this is the most shocking, to submit the character and operations of the God of heaven and earth to the ostracism of the people. And

yet what less do they, I pray, when they say these are the revelations of God, given to His servants, and by them communicated to you, yet no further authoritative upon you than you can comprehend them by your reason? Such a submission of things, higher than the highest intelligent mind, to the criticism of the vulgar, I say it again, was never heard of until the times in which we live. And the effect must be to level everything down to the lowest, to plebeianise heavenly things, and dissolve religious bonds, to reduce piety into common honesty, and common honesty into general utility, and general utility at length into private conveniency. Why, there is no human science that could stand such an ordeal. Submit the Newtonian philosophy, which is altogether mechanical, to a popular assembly, and tell them to judge it by their present condition of reason, to take what they understood and to reject the rest, what portion of it would stand it, I pray? Take Bacon's philosophy, and make the same popular appeal for the "*Novum Organon*," and you would not carry a single aphorism. Take Shakespeare's and Milton's poetry, and the verdict would be against it, just in proportion to the height, purity, and nobleness of the thought being so much the more removed out of the region of common sense. In short, take any work of man which hath in it any refined or enlarged forms of reason, and submit them to the judgment of popular assemblies, and to that judgment confine them, and what had you left in the world but a few vulgar proverbs, and mechanical rules, and self-sufficient maxims? and what spirit would you engender amongst the people but irreverence and hapless ignorance, and contempt of all things better, wiser, and greater than themselves? You would make the most level of all levelling republics—the equality of mind, equalised to the mob, and lopped off whenever it shot above the level of the base and pestilential sink into which mankind would reduce themselves.

Or suppose that any schoolmaster, to whom a goodly number of untutored boys, gathered from the random influences of the world, had been committed by their parents that they might be corrected in what was evil, and instructed in what was good, and broke in to be obedient and well-conditioned members of society, were to begin his labours by gathering

them together, and, reading over to them the rules of his school, were to say,—“Now, my children, you have heard what I think to be best for your welfare, but considering that it were tyranny in me to require more of you than you see it reasonable to give, I refer it to every boy’s reason to consider this our code of laws, and to obey it according as he seeth it good and right to do so.” And always as he read them out some new revelation in knowledge, and some new way of wisdom, he were to shut his book by saying,—“Take this into your consideration, my boys, and if you find it reasonable to adopt it do so, if not leave it alone, for it were monstrous in me to impose anything beyond what you clearly comprehend.” This were mighty liberal and delightful to the youth, and such a school were sure to be crowded if the children had their will; but what the issue would be in their character and their instruction, let the history of all tuition since the world began bear a unanimous testimony.

I have no fear of submitting the truths of revelation to a mature and humble reason, because I am convinced that such a reason would see itself represented therein; and it hath been proved by the great metaphysician of the German nation, that all the doctrines of the most orthodox theology are true in the pure reason, and so far from finding opposition therein find approbation. But I have the same objection to submit the truths of revelation to the criticism of vulgar common sense which I have to submit any great work of mature reason to the same ordeal,—which I have to submit the full-grown mind of a master to the beginners in the art or science, being assured it would bring down all excellence to the earth, and prevent the seeds which are springing in the earth from rising above the surface of the ground. Truly it may be said of this spirit, as Isaiah hath said of the latter day,—and I know not, nay I am persuaded, it is the consummation of this spirit which will bring the latter day to pass,—that it “shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low; and upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, and upon every high

tower, and upon every fenced wall, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low." I have no doubt that this spirit of levelling everything to the popular practical reason, which is coming in like a flood, bringing the myriads of the people to act with one consent, disengaged from every restraint but that power of knowledge and common sense in which they are united, will come against all the beautiful, and picturesque, and ancient, and substantial works of society, and after a direful conflict will sweep them level as the sand of the sea, bruise empires to powder, and be the instrument in the hands of God for preparing the way for that last empire which is to be set up in the earth, and which is to stand for ever.

I hold this form of idolatry to be worse than the former, inasmuch as the critical faculties of the mind are more vain, proud, selfish, and unsparing, than the poetical faculties of the mind. Inasmuch as they are both self-exalting, they are both against true religion, which is self-subjecting; but the latter is more evil than the former, because the selfish part, which it sets up, is more base and cruel. Any man can pull down and tear to pieces, but few men can create and construct. Therefore the lowest mob of men will gather round the standard of the latter, while only the most enlightened can erect the standard of the former. And from the two I know not in what wilderness the Church will hide her humble head; for surely they will combine against faith, and seek to put her to death. Superstition in its various forms they will soon overthrow: the superstition of the Papacy, and the superstition which lingers amongst ourselves. But every form of faith they have already in their hardihood entitled superstition. And they will come against the true Church like a flood. And then will be the day of trial and decision, when the Lord shall appear for His people, and shorten those days in which, if they were not shortened, no flesh should be saved. O men and brethren, and ye who love the simplicity of the faith as it is in Christ Jesus, be upon your guard against any league with these His enemies, who have taken the name of Christian, but worship the forms of human reason as surely as they who

placed a naked woman upon the altar and worshipped her as the goddess of reason. Be upon your guard against the undermining of your principles; and mark this, that no city was ever first taken in the citadel. The outposts, and suburbs, and walls, and town, are all taken before the citadel is ever attempted. So it is in the warfare which is waged against you. The outposts of your faith,—that is, your practical principles, which seem most remote from your faith in Christ the Son of God,—it is the artifice of the enemy first to attempt. Endeavouring to make you disciples of prudence and observers of expediency in your ordinary actions, then he will sap your reverence for your superiors and governors, representing it all as a covenant of men and no ordinance of God; then he will attempt the bulwarks of social life, the family and nuptial obligations, representing them as conventional and convenient ties, which should give way to greater good; and thus with wily step advancing, he will strike a blow at the citadel, and say, “Who is this Christ that He should reign over you, and what are His words that they should be a law to you?” Thus he goeth to work, and thus have I seen his work proceed amongst masses of the people. First he made them act from prudence in private matters, and get their principles out of sight, then he converted them into radicals towards political society, and then he had them ready for Unitarians, or Deists, or whatever was the name most prudent to adopt.

Therefore I warn the Church of Christ, and every one who calleth Christ his Lord and his God to look to himself, that he be clear from tampering with the principles of faith in the least iota of his life; and upon each man I call to watch for Zion's sake, that into her counsels she admit none of the worldly expedien-  
cies, but rule and govern and practise by faith alone. And ye, whose souls are intrusted to me by Christ, I entreat you to cleanse yourselves from all these idolatries, and to receive the word of God in the love of it. Receive it with a meek and humble mind. Listen to it with an attentive and awful ear. Practise it with a constant reliance upon the Spirit of God. Live in it, live by it, and it shall make your life most blessed. Oh, walk by faith and not by sight, and ye shall become great in the sight of the Lord, and powerful in the

spirit of the gospel. Oh that the Lord would make these words to enter into your souls! Oh that He would hear our prayer for your deliverance which we now pray unto Him, that every one who hath heard these warnings may turn from the idols of his inward man, to serve the living and true God, who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all deep places, who hath crowned us with loving-kindnesses and tender mercies, who hath redeemed our life from destruction that we should not go down to death, who hath preached salvation to us and to our children, and to those that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call! To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

### III.

#### IDOLATRY OF THE SENSE.

**I**N our last discourse we explained to you, my Christian people, the evils which come over the soul which alloweth its own imaginations to intermingle with its ideas of God, and receiveth not His revelations concerning Himself with the simple faith of most teachable children, shewing you by many instances that for a man to worship his imaginations was the very insanity of the mind, and for a man to risk any adventure upon his imaginations was the madness of folly, and therefore it is utterly preposterous, a very solecism, and hideous absurdity to introduce any imagination or speculation of the mind into those things which we believe upon God's report; and so far from denoting the vigour of our faith that we find it necessary to illustrate it by imagination or similitudes, it doth betray the instability of its foundation, and so far from confirming its strength, it doth weaken and impair it, thus to cement parts and pieces of the everlasting building of God with the most volatile and unsubstantial production of the ever-changing mind of man. From this, which is the idolatry, or, as it might be better termed, the no-religion of ideal and imaginative men, we passed onwards to unfold the evils of that popular idolatry which is now coming over the earth like a mighty deluge,—the idolatry of reason, or rather of common sense, which submits to every man's present temper and condition of mind, however ignorant, however carnal, however sensual, however devilish; to each man as he sits in the crowded congregation, with all his prejudices, errors, sins, and follies around him; to that which every man calleth his faculty of reason,—submitteth the everlasting oracles of the living God, which were given to enlighten the most enlight-

ened reason, to purify the purest conscience, and to instruct, by new measures of righteousness and holiness, the souls of all mankind; to reveal the universal corruption which hath consumed the heart, and the gross darkness which hath covered the eye of men, and to remove the veil which is cast over all nations. The evils of this idolatry we did but touch upon, because they are innumerable and incalculable, and like the locust consuming the beauty and verdure of the human soul, and sapping the foundations of all reverend things, human and divine. It levelleth God to the conception of the mob; and every glorious revelation of God, with its dense cloud of popular ignorance it sheareth of its beams; and of every stately plant of God it withereth the boughs and rotteth the roots out of the earth by cutting off the sap of the word of God, which maketh them flourish like the cedars of Lebanon; the spiritual life of all men, and of all the works of men, it deadeneth by the abolition of the mysterious communion of the word and Spirit of God, whereby alone life spiritual is maintained; nay, it warreth against the nobility of the mind itself, vulgarising every thought and despising every imagination which cannot be expressed in popular phrase, rendered to popular conception, and applied to popular advantage. This reason-worship gives not the outer court of the temple of God, but the sanctuary, nay, and the sanctuary of sanctuaries, the holiest of all, to be trodden under the foot of the Gentiles, which idolatry of common sense is the very idolatry now practising and prospering amongst us, and which must practise and prosper until it hath fulfilled the purposes of God, and brought about the destruction of superstition, and executed judgment upon her who is drunk with the blood of saints, and then, in the glory of its triumph, it shall come to its end, when the Lord shall consume it with the spirit of His mouth, and destroy it with the brightness of His coming.

We now pass on to shew the nature and the wretchedness of the third form of idolatry, which hath its origin in the sense, and expresseth itself by the worship of graven images, or other visible representations of the Divinity, against which the anger of the Lord hath been kindled in all ages of the Church, and for the abolition of which He hath framed the

most terrible of all His commandments, wherein He hath threatened visitations of His wrath upon all who make unto them graven images to bow down to them and serve them, and upon their children, and upon their children's children, to the third and fourth generations. Of which fearful commandment the history of His chosen people, from the time they worshipped the golden calf at the foot of Sinai until the time that they were delivered seventy years into the captivity of idolaters, is one constant series of executions most illustrative of Jehovah's jealousy over the glory of His own spiritual majesty. And we learn, from the Epistle to the Romans, that the gross and brutal, yea, worse than bestial practices to which the heathen nations were given up, came of the same bitter fountain. They "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things; wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves; who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. For this cause God gave them up to vile affections."

Now, forasmuch as this image-worship still holdeth the greater part of Christendom in superstitious bonds, far away from the knowledge and the blessing of God and His Church, and hath its seat even among ourselves, and is doubtless one pregnant cause of the judgments which come upon us, I hold it to be an acceptable service done unto God, and beneficial to the common weal, to open, in your hearing, the cause and the effect and the cure of this sensible idolatry which lingereth amongst us, and to which every man is liable upon the side of his senses, as upon the side of his knowledge he is liable to those other forms of idolatry concerning which we have heretofore discoursed. And as we have shewn you that the idolatry of reason and imagination is constantly besetting and besieging us, and hath a partial hold of many who conceived themselves clean escaped therefrom, we shall now, if we trace the subject also from its origin, detect the idolatry of the sense in quarters from which we are wont to

consider it far removed; and it will appear that the great iconoclast, or image-breaker, is no other than the revelation of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, first received by faith in the word of God, and secondly applied by the Spirit to the inward experience of the soul.

The third form of idolatry treadeth fast upon the heels of the other two. For when the mind of man hath made free with the revelations of God, which are to be entertained by faith alone, and devoted its worship and obedience to creatures of the imagination, or in its vanity subjected the revelation to reason, and counts as a vain thing every mystery, and every purity, and every spiritual doctrine and duty which the natural man in his pride or ignorance or sensuality gainsayeth; where either of these idolatries are,—which, truly, are one idolatry with a different object—the former of the ideal, the other of the rational; the one of mere sense, the other of the richer gifts of the soul,—it will come to pass, after a season, that the senses of the body will come in for their share in the work, and insist on having some outward form or similitude of that divinity which the mind hath framed. In the rude and barbarous conditions of society, where the intellect is still in its embryo state, or cultivated only for the gratification of the sense, they begin by giving to their ideas of God a sensible form, being able to conceive of no abstract power, dignity, or beauty, save that which is embodied in a form; and because the human form is the most noble, their deities have that form, with exaggeration of those features wherein the chief virtue of the god is imagined to reside. And if the arts have kept pace with their ideas, as in ancient Greece, they do then call upon the artist to present to the sense the best effigies which he can make of that grace, strength, majesty, or loveliness which they have imagined in their god; and there the idolatry of the sense keepeth pace with the idolatry of the imagination. But when a revelation hath been received by any people,—whether written in a book, as amongst the Jews and Christians, or handed down by tradition, as amongst the Egyptians and the other nations which reach farther back and join hard to the patriarchal times,—then the idolatry of the sense hath a different origin and

progress, and springeth out of the constant tendency of the sensible and carnal man to unspiritualise everything, and to bring everything down to his own vile and vulgar service. The number of the people who are wholly occupied with sensible things so preponderates over those who are devoted to the spiritual things of revelation, that there is no possibility of supplying them with spiritual teachers in sufficient numbers, and they act with such a dead weight upon the teachers themselves that in a short time both priests and people call for sensible forms by which to express those truths which are contained in the revelation. And you must either lose their reverence for, yea, their very knowledge of, the revealed truths, or you must express them by some signs or symbols constructed to the perception of those sensible faculties, of which alone they understand the report. Hence, most frequently, out of a pious but fatal accommodation to the sensible tastes of the people, they are indulged with emblems of the Divinity taken from amongst the animate or inanimate creatures, which, for a while, remain in the twilight condition of emblems; but soon the shades of popular ignorance set in, and they become the very things for which they were at first substituted as a representation. And now the idolatry, being established in the popular mind, begins to react upon those who were appointed keepers of the revelation, and who have betrayed it to the carnal part of man, which is the stronghold of the devil. And they are fain to entrench the truth against the corruptions by various forms of secrecy—hieroglyphics in Egypt, mysteries in Greece, the Sibylline books in Rome, the secret and unwritten verses among the Druids;—all which I regard not as artificial blinds to hide truth from the people, but as good and wise contrivances to defend the spiritual truth against the idolatries of the people. And hence it is that whatever is known of these receptacles of truth which existed in ancient times amongst the priests of all countries, and whatever hath come down of their opinions in verses, in laws, or in fables, converge to one point—the knowledge of one God, who created and governs all things, of a future state of rewards and punishments, and the necessity of an atone-

ment for the sons of men. The great heads of Christian doctrine are found at the foundation of all the ancient religions, the idolatries being but the accommodation to popular ignorance; and how constant and true the force of popular ignorance is, is manifested by the Catholic superstition, which is no other than the ancient mythology of gods and goddesses with the new names of holy men and holy women, and their worship as perfect an idolatry as any that hath ever existed upon the face of the earth.

Such is the generation of sensual idolatry; and if we give ourselves a little to consider the nature of man, we shall find the principles in his nature whose uniformity bringeth about this uniformity of result. The ancients were wont to say that the mind of man was a microcosm, or little world; in which, as in all their philosophical sayings, there was shut up much wisdom and truth, for the world is reflected in the mind as in a mirror, and the eye of the body doth not more completely embrace the visible forms of things than the eye of the understanding embraceth the laws by which they are constructed, and changed in their forms, and removed from their places. And science is, as it were, the map which the mind hath constructed of the places, and the chronological table of the changes of all things; and the end of science is to teach men where to find them, and how to be prepared for them. Science is a revelation of the visible creation, and a prophecy concerning its future condition; and the word of God is a revelation concerning the present condition of the spiritual creation, and a prophecy concerning its future state. There is a part of man which existeth for the outward world, and which hath no discernment of a spiritual world, and can have none: this is the seat and origin of all sensible idolatry. There is another part of man which hath no dealings with the visible world, but existeth for the spiritual world: this is the seat of true spiritual worship, if enlightened from above by a revelation made to faith. If not enlightened from above, it is the seat of the idolatry of the imagination; or if it submit the revelation made of faith to reason, then it is the seat of the idolatry of reason or common sense. To the former part of man—that

which communeth with the visible world—we must give our study, if we would discover the true cause of all sensible idolatry, or image-worship, strictly so called.

When the knowledge of man in whole or in part consisteth in sensible things, and the conceptions of his mind are chiefly or wholly of that which he hath seen, or tasted, or handled, or heard, and he is conversant with few abstract ideas or principles, then he is an idolater not only in religion but in everything, requiring always an image or sign or type of the thing concerning which you speak to him; and if there be no type, forming one in his mind before he can give utterance to any sane thought or speak with any intelligence of the matter. If it is of justice you speak to him, he conjureth up the recollection of an assize, and answers you according to its forms; if it is of honesty, the market-place is in his mind; if of truth, he conceiveth some fact accurately or falsely put into words; if of human well-being, a sufficient table and a comfortable dwelling-place is in his mind; if of power, it is physical strength or mechanical contrivances; if of duty, it is certain outward actions; if of religion, it is forms and ceremonies; if of heaven, it is the heaven of a Mohammedan; if of hell, it is the hell of a pagan. Which types of spiritual things he regardeth as the things themselves, and as such doth worship them, because the spirit within him is not quickened to desire the good of its life, and find it beneath the surface of all things, but the sense is always quickened to desire the good of its life, and hath found it upon the surface of all things. This is the Mosaic dispensation of human nature—the spirit under the veil of flesh; and the Mosaic dispensation is to be understood as designed for this infantine condition of the human spirit, and most wisely constructed, not to conceal the spiritual things, but to reveal the spiritual things by the only manner of revelation which was intelligible to the common mind of that sensible age. But as the spirit of the people came out of the cloud of sense, the dispensation brightened under the prophets, addressing itself to hope and desire rather than to sense. And the spiritual sun dawned not until both Jewry and Greece and Rome had become so emancipated from the sensible forms of the mind as to have schools of

sceptics, which always betoken an intellectual condition of the mind. Notwithstanding which it came to pass, that in the early ages of our spiritual doctrine the sensible forms of religion still clave to the people, so that in the primitive church the spiritual part of man was in childhood, and relapsed into complete idolatry until the Reformation brought us back again to spiritual religion. And now again the mind hath gotten into a sceptical mood with regard to the forms of the Protestant churches, craving something more spiritual still, which makes me believe that we stand upon the eve of a new outpouring of the Spirit, the second coming of Christ, when the forms of our present revelation shall be in some manner cleared away, and we shall see more nearly face to face than at present we are able to do.

But to return. That sensible condition of the mind in which you find the peasantry of all Catholic countries, and, we must confess, too many of the peasantry of this country, and which is not otherwise to be effectually removed (as it was effectually removed in the north) than by the vigorous preaching, general diffusion, and frequent discourse of the word of God, is the seed-bed of idolatry, and the religion of such people is all idolatry, if not of graven images or painted pictures, of the priest, or of the holy place, or of the holy book, or of the liturgy, or of the sacrament of baptism, or of the sacrament of the supper, or of the Creed, or of the Lord's Prayer, or of the burial service—of some one or of all the outward emblems which there is in the religion that is presented to their eyes.

But it is to the Church of Rome that we must always look for the perfection of a sensual religion; for the Papists have countenanced, and by authority established, and by every deceitful means sought to sanctify, this idolatry of the sense; so that from the beginning to the ending of their worship it is one appeal to the sense and nothing but the sense. Holy water as you enter,—and when you are entered the nostril is saluted with rich perfume, and the eye bedimmed with a pale religious light, contrived for all manner of twilight fooleries and deceptions,—and music that might charm an angel from the spheres ravisheth the sense of hearing,—and above, the amplitude of infinite arches with their holy blazonry, and tombs

beneath your feet, and holy shrines around you. And if you turn to the altar, it is the abomination of abominations,—the words of an unknown tongue to bar intelligence out,—tapers at noontide to encircle it with a mock glory,—pictures which smite the sense with the horrors of the crucifixion,—priests robed in emblematic garments, more mysterious than the ancient high priest. Ever and anon the tinkling of silver-toned bells, to announce the elevation of the host, whereupon you have in your ear the earnest and imploring voices of the assembled people, the organ's peal redoubled through the vast expanse of arches, perhaps the thunder of military music, and the rattling of their arms while they are grounded in token of ready homage. As the Lord liveth, there was never such a mystery of iniquity, such an abomination of abominations as this which the devil hath established in His sanctuary,—such a witchery of deception, such a captivation of the sense. And the Lord hath sworn in His wrath that it shall be swept from the earth with so terrible a destruction as hath not been since the world began, and shall not be again until the great day shall have baptized with its baptism of everlasting woe all that have had a hand in its construction, or been deceived with its deception, or bowed the knee to its idolatry.

The effect of which sensible religion is to nourish the sense into new life, and strengthen with the bulwarks of iron the fleshly citadel of the devil, and to pour out over all the people a deluge of gross sensuality; to paralyse intellect, and if it spring up to root it out of the earth; to beggar the moral enterprise of the soul, to subvert domestic purity, to prepare a people for the rod of tyranny here and for the pit of Tophet hereafter. It is to consecrate the bare prison of the soul, the brutal flesh which the very heathen knew to be its prison, to consecrate the vile clay into a sanctuary, to make its blind senses the conveyances of spirit, as if you would convey light by an aqueduct, or carry life in a transport ship. Oh, it doth make man's lamentable case most hideous and miserable! His spiritual capacities it doth extirpate, and bring the people down as low as human nature will go, while the masters of the superstition do lash their bodies and their minds with every form of penance and torture. To have shaken off such a hope-

less thralldom is the noblest, chiefest work of the human soul. Human degradation seemed for ever consummated, and man's doom for ever sealed up. God's great work seemed undone, Christ's gospel buried in the earth, the Holy Spirit of God banished from His beloved abode in the human soul. The Lord be praised, for His mighty arm did work the work by the hand of our fathers! The name of the Lord be greatly exalted, that He set the spirit of man free from its bonds, and made it to know the record of its everlasting redemption! I do praise Him that the land of my fathers was honoured to do this mighty work the most completely, and shook off every rag of the abominations in which they had buried the life of Christ, and again and again purged the land of it with the sacrifice of their own blood. But not unto them, not unto them, but unto the word of God be the glory, which was written upon the soul of a people, and made the people free. And if the Protestant Churches would take a lesson how to recover their former vigour and purity, they must know it is only by the circulation of the word of God,—not the book merely, but in the voice of all their preachers, in the voice of fearless preachers, which being omitted, all societies, articles, liturgies, schools, and places of worship, will stand them in no stead. It was by the foolishness of preaching that the gospel prevailed at first; by the foolishness of preaching it was recovered from a pit of superstition second only to the pit of hell; and by the foolishness of preaching, of gospel preaching in all its life and energy, will the Protestant faith keep its ground, or extend its blessed emancipation to papal lands. For the papal superstition is the most artful device of the devil to commend the gospel to the present fallen condition of human nature, and human nature hath ever a love to it; and even now into the Reformed churches abroad they are beginning to introduce images and to persecute vital godliness; and amongst ourselves they are beginning to call the Romish church a sister church. And our travelled men and women talk with great sensibility of the impressiveness of the Romish service, and nothing can defend the spirituality which still survives save the powerful and effectual preaching of those doctrines which are embodied in the Creeds and Articles and Confessions, which

the valiant Reformers, who fought and won the battle, drew up in order to defend the ground which they had cleared from the subtleties of the tempter. I could say much more upon the miserable estate to which that sensual form of the gospel hath brought the European nations, and of our proper defences against the springing up of the poisonous plant ; but I proceed to open a more refined form of the idolatry of sense.

To the idolatry of the sense it is not necessary that there should be a statue or a picture, as is shewn in the superstition of the Mohammedans, perhaps the most sense-cultivating and spirit-destroying superstition which ever existed in the world ; yet hath it no image. But it is a religion of the sense to the very core of it. Their prayers are all said towards Mecca, and a prayer not said towards Mecca is no prayer ; their hope of heaven is a carnal hope, and their fear of hell a carnal fear ; their law is no higher than a political law or system of police, and their religion no subjugation of the heart but of the sword, standing in ignorance and sense, and never to fall but by the progress of knowledge and reason, which will bring them into scepticism,—a state into which the Hindoos are coming ; and this, before another evil power hath wrapped the people in its chains, is the time to diffuse amongst them the spiritual religion of Christ Jesus. Nothing is necessary to the idolatry of the sense but ignorance, or darkness of the mind, for the five senses always live, and are always active, and in a state of ignorance they have the whole man unto themselves ; and hence it is constantly held forth in Scripture that the eyes of our understanding must be opened before we can have the fellowship of the gospel mystery, which is Christ in us the hope of glory. “ You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” “ The carnal mind perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned.” “ To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” “ There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.” From all which passages, and the whole continuity of the Scriptures, it is manifest that true worship and religion in the soul is nothing else than the quickening in us of that spirit which sense, and the dominion of sense in

the mind, had brought to be as good as dead, which quickening is by the Spirit of God applying to our spirits the word of God, which is spirit and life.

But when I say that a state of ignorance will always produce the idolatry of the sense, you will not make a converse of the proposition, and infer that a state of knowledge will destroy the evil plant, or eradicate its odour of death. You do not destroy a plant by bringing it from the wilderness, where it grew in the untutored wildness of nature, into a garden, where it is treated with all the knowledge of husbandry, but, on the other hand, you enlarge it, make it of a monstrous and unnatural size, and greatly increase the variety and brightness of its colours, and the plentifulness of its aromatic odour, and give it a new value and power over the sense of man. So there is a certain kind of knowledge which doth, as it were, cultivate this idolatry, and make it more attractive over the learned than it was over the unlearned condition of the mind. If the knowledge come in by the sense, as all natural knowledge doth, and the mind lay itself under to receive its impressions, whether of beauty, as the artist doth, or of harmony, as the musician doth, or of form and figure, as doth the mathematician, or of pleasure, as doth the epicure; then the idolatry, far from being weakened by the increase of knowledge, is strengthened and confirmed in exact proportion thereto. Insomuch, that I have ever found it more difficult to reveal a true spiritual and super-sensual perception in the mind of an enthusiastic naturalist than of a vulgar sensualist—the one being conceited of his form of sensuality, the other rather ashamed of it. And if I were called upon to say before which of these two congregations of men, an institute or royal society of savants, and a ring of wrestlers or pugilists, I would prefer to prophesy concerning the spiritual doctrine of Christ, I would hope for more success with the latter. From the former it is, "What will this babbler say?" from the latter, "Leave us alone till a more convenient season." From the former there is scoffs, satire, and ridicule; from the latter, blows and wounds,—which, being patiently borne, work softness and relentings; whereas the former being patiently borne, work only more contempt and

self-glory. The clown who supposeth his God to reside in the cathedral, and findeth Him at no time and in no place but when there, excited by all the visible emblems thereof, is not more an idolater than the artist who finds no frames of high devotion save when he looks upon the magnificent and picturesque forms of nature in the face of the heavens or the earth, or in the varying aspects of the countenance of man, the picturesque groupings of his companions, or the remarkable action of his varied adventures. The one is as much an idolater of place and time, of sense and sight, as is the other. And the naturalist is no better than either, who finds no more elevated frames of his being than when he discovereth another specimen of his art, or discerneth a new relation amongst those which are discovered to his hand. And I will advance a little further—that man who finds his highest emotions and desires in a well-governed state, or a prosperous family, or a high and noble station, or an eminent power, or a successful policy, all those sorts of men who wed their noble spirits to some present and realised forms of things, are at the heart and in the sight of God, who regardeth the heart, idolaters as much as is he who taketh a root out of the wood, with part of which he warmeth himself, and with the residue maketh unto himself a god, even a graven image, and falleth down to it and worshippeth it, and saith to it, “Deliver me, for thou art my God.”

And there is another form of sensible idolatry higher than these, to which I would advert—the worship of the mechanical wisdom and contrivance of the universe. This argument for the being of God which is derived from the economy of His works, hath been made very popular by the same ecclesiastical pen which set forth utility as the basis of morals, and rested the faith of the gospel upon the evidence of miracles and the credibility of the witnesses ; whose theology and morality and faith are all of a piece—the production of a shrewd and sound mind, altogether devoid of spiritual perceptions. But the theology derived from observing the mechanical contrivance of the universe is no better than the idolatry of the material universe or of that soul which moveth the universe,—either of the world, or of the soul of

the world. What would you reckon of the knowledge of one who derived all his knowledge of you from the motions of your limbs? or what value would you set upon the friendship of one who paid his addresses only to your material conformation, and knew not your soul, nor cared to know it further? Thus would love go by skill in anatomy, and communion would depend upon physiology. But the theology which rests upon the phenomena of matter for its basis is still poorer than the friendship which rested upon the structure and beauty of the person; because the mind of man is somewhat glassed in his outward countenance, but the Spirit of God is not faithfully reflected from the face of that creation where-with we are conversant. Once it was, but now it is not. The fall hath disordered nature, and marred the face of creation, and the sweet providence which waited on man hath been somewhat defeated of its purpose by the invasion of the devil, whose character is to be read in the chaos of the present world more clearly than the character of God. There is a veil of mystery upon all nature, and upon the eye of human understanding, which is become a part of nature; which veil is removed by the word of God while His Spirit quickeneth our spirits to peruse the same. And thus indeed His works and acts give true tokens to the quickened spirit; but they speak a language clean contrary to that which they spoke in the days of his blindness, and move him altogether otherwise than he was wont to be moved when, with his finer senses and his natural understanding, he conversed with the handiworks of God. So that, when our knowledge of God doth rest chiefly or entirely upon what is demonstrated in these His visible works, I reckon that it is nothing but the highest form of sensual idolatry, a worship of the world, or of the soul of the world, and no worship of the living and true God, who is a Spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. And if to be spiritually worshipped, then to be spiritually discerned—discerned by that spirit which in the natural man is dead in trespasses and sins, which in the creature is hidden under fivefold veils of sense, so that we are in darkness and we walk in darkness, and the god of this world hath blinded our eyes, and we can by no effort of reason discover

or comprehend or define the being of the invisible God, whom no man hath seen nor can see—whom no man knoweth but the Son, nor can know until the Son shall reveal Him. And when the Only-Begotten, which is in the bosom of the Father, doth reveal those things which are hid from the wise and the prudent,—it is to the simplicity and docility of babes, according to the measure of their faith, from faith to faith, that He maketh known the fellowship of the mystery; which revelation consisteth not in any effort of reason ascending into the heaven of her imaginations, or descending into the depth of her thoughts, but in the knowledge of Christ, wrought in them by the Holy Spirit. The believer is brought into the image of Christ, who is the image of the invisible God; growing into Christ's likeness, he grows into the likeness of God, according to these words of the apostle—"God, who commandeth the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It is not reason looking at her own imaginations or conclusions, but faith looking on the face of Jesus Christ, who was the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person. He who seeth the Son, seeth also the Father; he who hath the Son, hath the Father also. Therefore, whosoever would know anything of the mystery of God must seek to be delivered from the god of this world, who hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into them.

Much more remaineth to be spoken upon the idolatry of the sense, in which so large a portion of this nation is sunk, and of its heinousness in the sight of God, and of its destructiveness to the soul of man; but for the present, men and brethren, go to your homes and give thanks for your privilege in possessing a spiritual religion, which is the soul's present redemption and everlasting portion. Go to your homes and instruct your children in the doctrines of your spiritual faith, and take them bound, as David did his son Solomon, to worship the Lord God of their fathers, in the spiritual manner in which your fathers worshipped Him. Be jealous of the innovation of forms and ceremonies; however seemly, however much com-

mended, admit them not. It is like the letting in of waters. All these papal iniquities came at first out of an excess of piety. I warn you to trust in no outward services for your salvation, which is the bane of true worship, and the origin of all superstition, but to seek union with the word and Spirit of God, which will quicken in you a spiritual life, out of which will proceed a spiritual worship. And without such a spiritual life, inwrought by the word and Spirit of God, be it known unto you that your worship is an abomination in the sight of God, who is sick of new moons and appointed feasts, and cannot away with your solemn Sabbaths,—who is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

#### IV.

##### IDOLATRY OF FORMS.

**T**HE Christian Church, be it constructed with however great simplicity, must still have an outward doctrine and discipline, if not an outward form and service, by which to give it an objective reality in the sight of men ; and upon this outward object, whatever it is, the natural tendency of the mind to idolatry will seize, in order to gratify itself with the appearance of a worship, and escape from a true and spiritual worship, which without the Spirit cannot be offered up. You may, by a severe simplicity of ritual, discourage this tendency, and impede its growth, and postpone the triumph of its success, and transfer its hold from the sense to the understanding or the reason, so that it shall do the less mischief, and be the more easily shaken, when it hath gotten the upper hand of spiritual worship ; but it is vain to think that, by any ordinance or craft of man, you can prevent the oncoming of its empire, or shake its empire when it is once established, which is not to be done in the soul of an individual save by the manifestation of the Spirit of God, which is not to be done in a nation save by the faith of the word of God. Even though a man were to separate himself wholly from the communion of all churches, to isolate himself to himself, becoming a non-hearer, as they say in the north, the Bible itself, the word of God, the only object to which he giveth reverence, may become an idol, and stand in the way of that Spirit whereof it was given to be the assurance and the introduction into the world. Of which the mystics being well aware, think to rid themselves of this last refuge of idolatry by placing the true light within themselves, altogether independent of any written word ; but,

alas! they wot not that they thus get into the very centre of all idolatry, by making their own soul stand to them for a divinity. When religion, as with the mystics, and with the Friends, who here join hard to the mystics, becometh wholly subjective, or in one's self, then though there be not an object outward, there is an object inward, I myself, upon which it is concentrated, and out of which it flows, from the power and domination of which revelation was wholly intended to deliver us.

It is a vain thing, therefore, to think that by any outward ordinance, let you peel it and strip it as you please, you can insure a true and spiritual worship to any church. For I have seen the very separation itself become an idol; and at this day I doubt greatly whether the circumstance of being in a state of separation be not as great an idol, generally, to those who are in Dissent, as the circumstance of being in an Established Church is to those who are planted there. For example, I find that adult baptism is at this day as great an idol to those who hold that tenet, as infant baptism is to those who hold the truth of baptismal regeneration. In like manner have I seen the notion of a pure communion become as great an idol as the wafer itself. And in matters of church government I have seen meagre Independency become as powerful an idol as rigid formal Presbytery, and order-loving Presbytery as powerful an idol, though not so gorgeously adorned, as absolute and stately Prelacy. And there can be no doubt, when the fathers of the Secession in Scotland seized upon, and desired wholly to appropriate, the ministry of the devoted Whitfield, saying they alone were God's people, that their non-patronage, the one point upon which they seceded, had become an idol which impeded the Spirit of Christ more from their vision than all the evils they complained of in the Church, who were right glad to entertain the Episcopal man of God. All this I say without any prejudice against or judgment upon these peculiarities amongst the brethren, merely to shew how the absence as well as the presence of a form, the assertion as well as the denial of a doctrine, the rightness as well as the wrongness of a practice, may become an idol to the idol-

loving and idol-worshipping soul of man. Nor would I by these remarks have it inferred that all forms and doctrines are equally liable to idolatry, or that the idolatry builded on them is equally pernicious, or equally stable, but simply to deliver to you my conviction of the prevalence of idolatry under every disguise, and that I may declare to you the idolatry of forms of which I am now to discourse, and how it grows out of the seed of the most pious and pure conception, and spreads like a canker over the planted churches, until it becomes thus withered and bare, fruitless and leafless, fit only to be cast out and trodden under the foot of man.

And that I may handle this subject of forms aright, I would reach back for information to the very beginning of the revelation of God. At the first, while our first parents abode in innocency, their worship of God consisted in communion and discourse of soul with the Son, the goings forth of the Father's presence, who spake unto them, and walked with them, and conversed with them in the paradise of Eden. And their service consisted in the royal exercise of power over all the living creatures of the elements, and haply over the elements themselves, so that I much question if the first Adam had not all the power over nature which the second Adam came clothed withal. But be this as it may, when he fell through the faith of the word of Satan, which he preferred to the faith of the word of God, the first act of worship we read of was sacrifice, doubtless instituted of God to preserve the memory of sin, and to teach the manner of our redemption from sin. And of forms, or ceremonies, or institutions, we read of nothing besides,—all notice of religion consisting of walking with God like Enoch, and preaching righteousness like Noah; that is, the dedication of the life and of the discourse to the service of God. And thus, through the patriarchal dispensation, religion continued to stand in life and in discourse, with sacrifice. And when the Lord would make a revelation to them, it was as man converseth with man, in simple and formless discourse. And when they would hand down to their posterity the knowledge which they had received of God, it was by the tradition of words, by prophecy and threatening, and other forms of discourse.

Thus worship continued to stand in meditation, prayer, life, and discourse, till the time of Moses, when, on many accounts, it became necessary to change the form of revelation.

For the people through whom it pleased God to carry on the main stream of revelation, though no people were left without a witness, had, by the arts and outward sciences of Egypt, been involved in the spiritual darkness which arts and outward sciences always bring with them,—been so sensualised and estranged from the God who had made Himself known to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, their fathers, that they seem to have forgot Him by that name, so that Moses inquired, “When I shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say unto me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?” The minds of the people had been degraded by their captivity of four hundred years, and needed a revelation of a different kind from that which the spiritual simplicity of their fathers enjoyed. But it is not the less a form of the divine mind, and only the more to be admired as a gift, because of the condescension to a weak and wicked form of the human mind. Even as a philosopher who accommodates himself to an infant’s understanding, or a good man who brings his good instructions to the wicked abode and uncircumcised ears of the wicked, is more to be admired and praised for the same. Now, this institution of the former covenant, given by the mediation of Moses, is the more carefully to be considered by us, inasmuch as its formality and splendour have at all times helped in the formality and splendour with which Christian worship hath been encumbered, and from which it is our purpose to defend it. To this, therefore, we pray your regards for the better understanding of the condition of worship in which we ought to stand.

Moses, the man of God, being filled with the fulness of divine wisdom and spiritual inspiration upon the mount of God, descended unto the people, and embodied that law and ritual by which they were to become a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These ordinances and institutions were a perfect form of the Holy Spirit, suited to the

present condition of men, and designed to unfold itself into more full development, like the fruits and flowers of the earth,—not to be abrogated, but to be fulfilled; not to be destroyed, but to be finished; a perfect organism of truth, which contained within itself, as doth the seed, the power of revealing other perfect organisms, until the fruit shall be matured and gathered into the garner of the Lord. And in practice it spread itself like a mantle over the whole body of Jewish life, and was fitted to fill and occupy the whole being of the people, and to lead their mind into the condition of desiring a more mature form of revelation, which the Lord had prepared in His counsels to grant them. This is to be regarded, therefore, as the first form which the Holy Spirit assumed to Himself, and taught to men as proper for expressing their worship of the living and true God. And it is to be carefully remarked, that however the people fell away from the spirit of faith into the spirit of formality, and from the spirit of formality into the spirit of idolatry, the ordinance of the Lord continued to manifest itself over their head like the canopy of heaven, and to rebuke them of idolatry, and convict them of sin, even as the majestic and bountiful canopy of heaven rebuked the heathen nations of their departure from the natural knowledge of the Creator which was written on their hearts. No prophet of the Lord said, Let us simplify the ritual to the outworn endurance of the people; no priest of the Lord dared to take from it a tittle, lest, like Nadab and Abihu, who offered strange incense before the Lord, he should be smitten to the death; and every king came to condign punishment who dared to depart from the ordinances of the Lord, though it were done on the most prudential grounds, like Saul in the matter of the Amalekites, or by the most godly of princes, like Uzziah in the matter of the priestly office. The three offices of prophet, priest, and king yielded reverence to the majesty of God, or if they yielded it not, they sore repented them of their impiety.

From the time of Moses to the time of David the Holy Spirit added nothing to the form of worship by which it pleased the Lord to be worshipped of His servants; and though prophets and seers with the spirit of understanding

arose in Israel, as Samuel and Nathan ; and captains with the spirit of might, as Joshua and Samson, they had not revealed to them any addition to that which had been given to Moses, the man of God. But when David, the anointed servant of the Lord, having been tried with all experiences, outward and inward, whether of grief or joy, of spiritual desertion or spiritual fulness, was made triumphant over every extremity, and from every depth recovered by the Spirit of the Lord, there being in him a mighty spirit of prophecy, and a rich endowment of grace, he was appointed of the Lord to set in order the form of the temple service, and inspired to compose those psalms and spiritual songs which have been, and to the end shall continue, the most rich and harmonious utterances of the Holy Spirit. This ample service was the savours and the odours of the fruitful soul, the musical and melodious voices of the blessed soul which God hath filled with His gracious presence, the organ through which the spirit expressed the rich and exuberant glory of its strength unto the King who worketh so wonderfully for His people. It was the holy order of Jehovah's earthly court, the holy ritual of the house wherein it was His good pleasure to dwell. And David, the man after God's own heart, in heart the divinest of men, though in life he often erred from the way, was chosen to lay the top course, and bring out the top stone of the building, and gloriously to adorn the pinnacle thereof, because his soul was full of the forms of high and heavenly glory, even as Moses, meek in the strength of wisdom and knowledge, yet most zealous for the Lord, was chosen to lay the foundation of the structure in the laws and manners and religious ordinances of the people.

From that time forth until the long and doleful captivity of Judah, the worship of the Lord continued as it had been constructed by those two chosen instruments of His Spirit, and the people of Israel and Judah ceased not from their idolatries, against which the Spirit of the Lord did testify, in the former by Elijah and Elisha and Amos, and in the latter by Isaiah and Jeremiah and Hosea, and all the prophets ; yet did He not give unto these His servants any new rite or ceremony or form of worship, or advance them unto the dignity

of master-builders of His house, but ordained them for prophets to testify against the formality and backslidings of the people, and by new light to prepare the way for the new aspect which His church was preparing to assume. This took place in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah and Daniel, and the other children whom the captivity had instructed in the woes and pains of idolatry to which their fathers had obstinately adhered ; who, when they returned into the land, addressed themselves to the work of reviving the worship of the Lord, and expressed the spirit of experience which had been given to them, not so much by the rebuilding of the temple, at the sight of which the old men wept for the glory that was departed, but by the establishment of synagogues through all the dwellings of Israel, and in all places to which they might be scattered abroad, wherein the law and the prophets were read every Sabbath day, and forms of prayer offered up to the God of their fathers, and exhortations, and instructions, and other forms of discourse held amongst the people. And that they were moved herein by the Spirit of God there can be no doubt, from the uniform respect and obedience which were shewn to it by our Lord and His apostles. The canon of the Old Testament was nearly completed, and the Spirit was about to depart from between the lips of living men ; but before He departed, He moved His servants to set in order the form of preaching or proclamation, that the people might bear testimony against idolatry in all lands, and the way of Messiah might be prepared as the expectation and desire of all the earth. And thus, at three equidistant intervals, was the building of the Lord finished by Moses and David and Ezra : the former bringing in the law which was to mould the nation into distinctness and separation ; the second leading the way to the glorious succession of prophets who descried and signified the gospel from afar ; the last disseminating amongst the people the glorious revelations which God had cast into the world, to prepare the world for the fulness of time which was to come.

Now, it is to be diligently remarked, that the work of God which then grew and completed itself was not merely a form of worship, but a method of revelation ; not a manifold,

wearisome act of service, but a constant presentation of truth in that form which best befitted the low condition of the people. There was nothing of it in the time of Abraham and the patriarchs, who lived in the simple exercise of their reason, and therefore had truth revealed simply to the faith of their reason. But when the children of Abraham in Egypt had been exercised in the formal, material, and sensible occupations of the mind which artificial society introduced, and had to subsist as a nation among nations, and were degraded in the intelligence of their minds, as men are universally by material and sensible pursuits, it became necessary that religion should have that objective and outward character which Moses gave it in all its rigour, and from which the Lord sought to redeem it according as the mind of the people was redeemed from the evil condition which occasioned it and made it necessary. This Paul distinctly teacheth in his epistle to the Galatians, where he puts the very question, "Wherefore then serveth the law?" and thus answereth the question: "It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." When this seed came, it was therefore removed out of the way, having served its end, but not until everything which it contained of type, ordinance, figure, promise, and prophecy, had been fulfilled. So that at the opening of the gospel we stand completely delivered from its obligation, and are to look upon it as a commentary upon the gospel made to sense, a visible form of its several truths. And on some other accounts it is very interesting; for example, as an illustration of Divine providence,—as a code of national law,—as an exemplification of Divine judgment,—as a prophetic history of events to the end of the world,—and, in short, as a form of the Divine Spirit accommodated to an early condition of the human mind.

We are come now to the beginning of the gospel, which came out of the former, and drew it up into itself, as the plant comes out of the seed and draws up its nourishment into itself; and here we stand with the form of the primitive and intermediate revelation wholly removed, and the question is, What form now did the Holy Ghost take to express Himself withal? To this question I shall endeavour to render

the true answer, without regard to the established customs of any church.

When the Saviour yielded up the ghost, pronouncing with His last breath the termination and completion of the former revelation, "It is finished;" and having risen from the dead, instructed His apostles to wait the coming of the Spirit, before they set their hand to the great work which was committed to them; and the Spirit on the day of Pentecost came rushing in His fulness upon them,—how did that Spirit with which they were filled express itself before the world? First in the fearless preaching of Christ and Him crucified, as the only redemption of our race from the power of sin, and salvation from the wrath which is to come,—as the second Adam of whom every man must be born again ere he can see the kingdom of heaven. For the promulgation of this one truth the Spirit furnished them with all the means, and prepared them to meet all the violent consequences which thereupon ensued—the loss of property, the abandonment of friends and kindred, the endurance of all risks, adversities, and death, in the greatness of their devotion, and the ardour of their love. And what outward ritual did they bring to view? None whatever, but absolved them from that to which they were at present subjected, except in a few things which they retained for the sake of peace. What, then, was the form of the new religion? The form of the new religion was in a heart and soul, and mind and strength, wholly devoted unto God. It lay in a holy life, a life sanctified throughout,—the temple being the heart, and the service of the temple the obedience of all the members to the law of the holy mind. The former covenant had ordinances of divine service and a worldly sanctuary, which was a figure for the time then present. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, by His own blood entered at once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. And we are not come unto the mountain which might be touched, and that burned with fire, but unto the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the general assembly of the first-born which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made per-

fect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.

That is to say, the apostles expressed the Spirit within them by those superhuman exertions and sufferings in which they travailed all their life long in the birth of spiritual children, and in the unveiled doctrine which they have left upon record for our learning, and in the unspotted holiness which they have expressed in all their writings, and in the heavenliness of mind, and in the unweariedness of well-doing, and in the boundlessness of charity, and in the sublimity of sentiments, and in the inexhaustible consolations, and in the things honest, pure, lovely, and of good report, in the form of the redeemed conscience, in the form of the practical conduct, in the form of the spiritual communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, which they have written out, and which they exemplified,—to which elevation of feeling, knowledge, and enterprise, fixed by these twelve sons of the Holy Ghost, and brethren of Christ, the Church must ever look up until the days of still greater refreshing do come from the presence of the Lord. A holy heart, and holy mind, and thence proceeding a holy life, is the only form of divine worship which the apostles left upon record, and whosoever believeth in Christ must understand that this is the true worship with which the Father delighteth to be worshipped.

The more to confirm all the preceding notions concerning the abrogation of all state and ceremony in the worship of God, of all place and time and outward circumstance, and to elucidate still further the exact nature of spiritual worship, let me turn your attention to our Lord's own words, anticipative of this happy consummation, which He spake to the woman of Samaria, who perceiving that He was a prophet, inquired of Him concerning a point of local worship, whether upon the Samaritan mount which is Gerizim, or upon the Jewish mountain which is Zion, they should worship God. "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to

worship him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." In which word of the Divine Saviour is contained the source of all true worship, and the exposure of all idolatry. For therein it is declared that the worship which the Father seeketh is in spirit and in truth,—in spirit as opposed to time and place, and the other conditions of sense; in truth as opposed to hypocrisy, formality, and pretence. And the reason assigned for it is, that God is a spirit, and must be served with spiritual sacrifices. Now it is written in the preceding discourse of our Lord with Nicodemus, that what is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit, and that this latter is not a part or a consequence of our natural birth, but a new birth which every man must undergo who would see the kingdom of God: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." From the tenor of which two discourses it necessarily follows that spiritual worship, the worship which the Father seeketh, is a consequence of the work of the Spirit in our souls, and originateth in that new creature which is begotten in us through the seed of the word which liveth and abideth for ever; and that until this new life is revealed in the soul, we are not able by any severities inflicted on the flesh, or any voluntary humiliations of the mind, or any dedication of our faculties, to offer a true and acceptable worship unto the Lord. Whatever, therefore, proceedeth out of the pure sense, or out of the unregenerate mind, without respect to the Spirit of God within us, and whatever addresseth itself primarily to these, and through them seeketh way to the spirit, is not the worship of the Father of spirits, however high it may arise above the coarse and vulgar forms of idol-worship. And all that discourse which you hear concerning the stirring up of the soul by architecture for the eye, and music for the ear, and other accommodations for the taste, savour of idolatry, and tend to promote it; whereas all that discourse and premonition, addressed to the spirit, and calling it to be stirred up to magnify the Lord, savour of spiritual worship, and tend to promote it. So that it is to me a far more convincing proof of the pure spirituality of our Church to look upon these unadorned, uncomfortable, barn-

like, and sometimes hovel-like places of worship, than to look upon the Saxon and Gothic cathedrals of ancient, or the Grecian and Roman structures of modern times.

Nevertheless when the Spirit hath created within us a spirit which holdeth of God as its parent, deriving from Him, as the child from its parent's breast, the milk of its infancy, and the strong meat of its maturity, and devoting to Him the affections and longings and trust of its childhood, and the strength and wisdom and endurance of its manhood, it cometh to pass by natural course, that this noblest faculty whereby the soul holdeth of heaven and comprehendeth immortality, asserteth its former nobility over the reason and the natural understanding and the sense, doth compel their unwillingness to obedience, and break them in to do its good pleasure, mortification though it may cause them, and though it may bring from the powers of the present world all discountenance, peril, and persecution. At which stage of our regeneration our members, which heretofore we yielded as instruments of unrighteousness, are, like things which have passed through a death and resurrection, yielded as instruments of righteousness unto God, and then they are the servants of God, and do worship Him, in as far as they obey the holy law of the Spirit in our mind, and refuse the unholy law of the flesh which is in our members. Then also the understanding perceives in the varieties of natural things good and gracious evidences of God, and offers to the God of nature that contemplative worship concerning which poets and essayists have said such fine things, though unconscious to any of its emotions. Then also the reason, in the delights which it hath within itself, altogether independent of the outward world, in its feelings, affections, joys, sorrows, fears and hopes, obeyeth the heavenly Spirit which sits on the throne as the centre of our being. And the whole complex being of man is offered up to the Lord according to that beautiful saying of St Paul,—“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service;” and in another place he saith, “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto

the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And now when the new man hath triumphed over the old man with his corruptions and lusts, and the quickening Spirit of the second Adam hath shot His heavenly life to the very extremities of the living soul and mortal body of the first Adam, it cometh to pass without any idolatry that the ear may serve the Lord with melody, and the eye serve Him with elevations of beauty, and the tongue with spiritual songs of praise, and the body with a pure and comely raiment, and the household with a proper and convenient order; then also the understanding may search into all knowledge to lay it on His altar, and the soul for all poetry to sing it in His all-hearing ear, and the will for all mighty resolutions to fulfil His word, and the whole man for majestic undertakings, wherewith the whole world may resound again with the glory of the Lord, the Lord our God, who alone doth wondrous works that excel in glory!

## V.

### IDOLATRY OF SYMBOLS AND FORMS.

**WE** taught in our last discourse that the *form* of the Christian religion consisted in the life of the new man, with the heart created after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, and in the outward manifestation thereof, by wisdom, holiness, and love, in all our discourse and action,—in the denial and mortification of the most noble, as well as the most base of our former inclinations,—in the subjugation of the world, and the assured victory over death and the grave, and whatever other fruits do accompany and flow from the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. So that the Christian missal or service-book is the New Testament, and its observances the particulars therein contained, of a sanctified heart, mind, and life ;—and the place of Christian worship is not upon this or that mountain, but in the spirit—that is, wherever our body beareth our spirit about—and in truth, that is in the true expressions, whether by word or action, look or gesture, of those emotions with which the Holy Spirit hath made us instinct ;—and the time of Christian worship not on Sabbath-days, nor fasts, nor festivals, but at all times and seasons, when we are in the house and when we are in the field, when we are in the city or in the country, at home or when we are wayfaring abroad ;—and the acts of Christian worship not in bowing down or rising up, or other religious acts of the temple or the altar ; but in everything which we do, down even to the necessary acts of eating and drinking, which, with everything else, we should do to the glory of God.

If this doctrine which we taught be true, that the form of the Christian religion is accomplished in the dedication of

each several soul to the delectable service of Him who hath redeemed it, to what serve the outward observances of the house of God, and the holy sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, concerning the necessity and great importance of which we have often discoursed in your hearing? To these, the public visible forms of the Christian religion, we shall now endeavour to assign their proper place and value, in order that they may stand before you in their true sense and signification, and cease to obscure the essential and true form of Christianity, that you may be warned against that idolatry of them to which we of the Protestant churches, in the absence of other objects, are so much addicted.

It is to be observed, then, that in the devotion and dedication of the whole soul to Him who hath redeemed it, there is included the social and sympathetic, no less than its private and personal faculties, and the expressions of the former, no less than of the latter, will be yielded unto God. Therefore, those assemblings of ourselves together, which heretofore took place for the sake of worldly entertainment and the recreation of society, or to gratify the faculties of the mind with friendly discourse, or to listen to some one able to instruct us, will, in those over whose spirit Christ hath taken the sovereignty, be desired for the entertainment of their spiritual man, who hath the same desire of society, the same relish of friendly discourse, and the same desire of information in his kind, which the natural hath in his, and for higher objects to exercise them withal. For the Spirit doth not cut off any of the members of the mind or of the body, but breathes into them the breath of life from heaven, that they may know each one how to work the works of God. Therefore religious assemblies come to the wants of the spiritual man as genially as worldly assemblies come to the wants of the natural man, and are but one function of his being. Whence you have no commandment appointing them in the New Testament, when or where or how often they shall take place; no rule prescribed to shew in what manner they shall be conducted, the whole matter being left to the social appetite and discretion of the spiritual man; only it is written that we should not desert those religious assemblies out of fear or love of the

world's assemblies, and that all things in them should be done decently and in order. But of the sacredness of one place over another, or the consecration of one house rather than another, or the forms of its furniture, or the order of its service, or the dress of the officiating priest, and other outward things, there is no mention whatever made in the New Testament, and it is bondage to be bound to them any further than as convenient customs, which are not to be thought of nor even spoken of, unless they should catch the idolatry of the people, from which if you cannot rid the people, then, I say, shiver house and furniture to atoms, and lay the dagon of stone and lime level with the ground, rather than the people shall continue in their idolatry of carved stone and ornamented work. But while they are exerting no such baneful influence upon the worshipper, let them abide, however simple and bare, however splendid and gorgeous, and never be spoken of at all, that way of it being best which veileth the spirits of the people least. Now if those religious assemblies be the natural offspring of the social faculty of the spiritual man, which is many times multiplied in its energy by the new law of love, under which he liveth, it is manifest that there must be a spiritual man to put forth the faculty, before these expressions of it can be created, and that when there is not the private and personal form of religion in the heart of the company which hath met together, there can be no spiritual fruit of their meeting, which, be its form what it pleaseth, can be nothing else than a mixture of worldly feelings under a disguise. The praise of God cannot be uttered by any soul which is not inwardly convinced of God's praiseworthiness, and hath not a lively and abiding sense of those blessings, temporal and spiritual, for which we praise Him with a song. And the measure of heart and soul and spirit and truth with which we praise Him, must be in exact proportion to the devotion and dedication which we have made of our personal and private concerns to His holy service. It is mockery and mummery to think that the presence of a multitude, or the mellifluous notes of music, can charm into heavenly moods a heart which hath been corroded all the week with worldly cares or consumed with worldly engagements. There may be

a transient glow of social warmth, or a triumphant shout of strength, as in a theatre, or before a hustings, and there may be a seizure and ravishment of the soul as at an opera or oratorio; but what emotions are wrought upon a worldly mind by the praises of the house of God, its organ, its choir, and the loud and vehement voices of the assembled people, are no more sacred, no more godly, no more worshipful of God, than the emotions which are felt in their high places of vanity and wickedness. Also the prayers offered up to God, whether by the living voice of the minister or after the dead letter of printed books, is as the voice of an automaton in the ears of a people who have no private and personal exercise of devotion. And that it is no better than an automaton's voice, you may see by casting a glance over the heedless, staring, unimpressed multitude; and a blind man may perceive it in the rustling noise of their restlessness. And the poor minister, who has to deal with such a prayerless people, had as well keep silence, or turn away his face and weep; but if he had the soul of a prophet, he would burst the fetters of custom and form, and ask of God a hearty answer to his prayer, while he prayed that He would discomfit the security of the people, condignly punish their present hypocrisy, and stir them up by His fearful judgments to the sense of His injured majesty: much rather do so than, by changing his prayer into a piece of eloquent declamation, seek to catch, captivate, and gather in by arts of speech, that roving prodigal spirit which will not, by all God's kind entreaties, turn its heart back again to seek His love, nor by all its own wants and miseries, lift up one supplication to His grace that they may be removed. With regard to prayer and praise, it is most manifest therefore that they are naught but a solemn mockery of God, unless preceded by that personal and private form of religion which is the beginning of the Christian religion,—the stem and bough of it which carry and bear up the graceful and majestic life of the tree; whereupon one or two figs may haply be found, but the plentifulness of the fruit, and its first maturity, is to be elsewhere sought. But when the souls of many men, yea, of one or of two men, have been converted to the Lord, they desire to communicate to one

another the great things which have been wrought for them, and to praise Him for all His wonderful works unto the children of men; they cannot be silent to one another over that which chiefly concerneth their spirit; and if it be given them to testify the same before those who know not yet the abiding-place of love, and the treasures of grace, they are right glad thereat, and come up with joy to the public assemblies of the people, and count it a comely thing to praise the Lord in the great congregation.

Yet, though it be manifest that these public services of prayer and praise have no significancy or spirit save in those who are sanctified unto the Lord by personal sanctification, this does not hinder the heartless formalists, who go through it Sabbath after Sabbath, bowing and kneeling, and responding in proper time, from thinking that thereby the whole form of religion is accomplished, and that Christ inquireth no more after them, but is well content with having received these large dues from their unwilling hand. These men are less to be spared than the Papists, who really claim pity, for the thick blind and mystery of iniquity which hath been spread on the light of truth; but then our Protestant formalists have the truth shining in their face, through the pure and wholesome air, yet wilfully will they hide themselves from His light, and involve themselves in artificial darkness, and worship the darkness which they have made. Theirs, above all others, is the condemnation that light hath come into the world, but that they loved darkness rather than light. And the Papist hath really something to shew for himself: his bead-roll, his pater-nosters, his crossings, his masses, his confessions and absolutions, his household gods which he calls saints, his gods of the place, and his gods of the days and months; but then our Protestant formalists having nothing of that multitude of forms to shew, have yet the face to think that an hour on Sabbath, the laziest, heaviest hour in the weekful of hours, will purchase absolution for all the rest, and is hardly remunerated by an eternity of blessedness. Such Protestant formalists are on the very edge of no religion. Theirs is a sorry sham of a religion, but the Catholics have a broad-spreading and cunning

substitution for a religion. The former is the most inexcusable; the latter is the most lamentable. The former hath but a step to become an infidel; the latter hath terrible throes, like the parting of breath, before he can become an infidel. Amongst a nation of the former, which our nation, I think, is fast hastening to become, a new plantation of religion is required; amongst a nation of the latter, reformation is what is needed, some powerful hand to strip off the veil under which the beauty and loveliness and active members of religion have been buried. We have less danger in our Church from this quarter, having no forms of prayer; but in our sister Church the danger is imminent, even amongst the godly, of idolising those forms in which their church is most piously and decently arrayed. And if I err not, at this very time it hath grown into an idol with the most pious of her people, and is too much talked of, and discoursed of, and depended on. But amongst the mass of the people of all ranks it is an idol as surely as the Catholic missal; and the weekly saying of its prayers is as securely rested upon as the intercession of all the saints in the canon. And so it will continue until, instead of gratifying the idol, and abetting the idolatry with continual offerings of adulation, they bear against both with a constant prophecy of condemnation, and shake the people out of their blind veneration of a most excellent book, in order that they may introduce them to its wholesome religious acts,—tear the veil of superstition which is at present over it, that the people may come at the true light and nourishment which it contains. But this only by the way, and for the sake of those who have an ear to hear it, our main object being to shew that these outward forms of prayer and praise which are performed in the sanctuary are a production of that personal and private religion where we place the true form of the Gospel.

We now advance to the second part of the public service of the sanctuary, where idolatry is wont to find its chief harbour amongst ourselves. This is the preaching of the word, which stands in exactly the same relation to personal sanctification as we have shewn public worship to do. These exercises upon the word, and the doctrine of the

word, which we make from Sabbath to Sabbath, are either meant for the nourishment and instruction of those who already believe in Christ, and have the primary form of the Christian in their spirit and life,—or they are for the persuasion, and exhortation, and encouragement, and stirring up of those who halt between Christ and the world,—or they are for the cutting off and condemnation of those who will not believe but continue obstinate in their sins; for the nourishment of the Church, for its propagation or for its separation. And though there may be preaching where there is no church, nay, and ought to be the more on that account, it is no act of religion in those who hear until there is a church, but only a declaration in their ears of that which they may hear or forbear to hear. So that hearing becomes a dutiful act of religion only to those who are already in Christ, or to those who are seeking to be found in Him, not having their own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith. To others it is an exercise of hearing and understanding, an entertainment of taste or reason, an excitement of their affections, or a breathing of sweet thoughts over their souls—no solemn, dutiful occupation of their time and talents, for which they feel responsible unto God, and are therefore very careful how they hear. The hearing of the word, therefore, or of the preaching thereof, stands in the same circumstances as the other parts of public worship, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, only to those who by daily use have their spiritual senses exercised to discern good and evil, and who, by commerce with the unbelieving and idolatrous world, are so worn down and wearied out that they hunger and thirst for the sincere milk and strong meat of the word. And they are well pleased that the tides of time have a weekly rest, and the current of affairs a weekly cessation; that there is a hallowed, sequestered, calm, and placid bay in the boisterous and troubled sea, which they arrive at after weekly voyages of risk and hardship, and when they are refreshed with the good cheer, and furnished with the good instructions of an experienced master of the seas. Oh, how sweet do mariners

feel it, so to find an open and a friendly creek wherein to thrust their crazy bark and preserve their weary lives ; so sweet do the people of God feel it to listen to the spiritually-replenished and divinely-enriched discourse of a faithful minister. The times have been when the word of such seers of divine things was very precious, and when the people loved not their own lives for his sake. I know the solitary vale in my native land which was ransacked and spoiled by a troop of murderous horsemen, which the people patiently bore until their godly minister was driven with the rest of the spoil ; and I know well the proud eminence, the northern barrier of the valley, whereon the people, shrouded in the mists of the morning, gathered themselves to the rescue of the beloved man ; and when the cloud rolled its skirts from around the ministers of Heaven's vengeance, there they stood, to dispute it with the armed and embattled chivalry of hell, and broke them in their godly wrath as the potsherd is broken in pieces, and in their fury dashed the horse and his rider into the abyss which yawned beneath to receive the sons of Belial. It was not the man but the word of God which moved the people so. The word of God was very precious to their souls. For I have seen in the same valley the close amphitheatre of rocks, where they were seen to sit shrouded in twilight, with the stream rushing amongst their feet, to listen to their pastor's voice, their only earthly possession, which truly they would not part with, and see suffocated with a burning brand, but preferred rather to die. And the Lord delivered their enemies into their hands, and saved their beloved preacher.

The same spiritual desires which draw the people of God into one place, that they may shew the voice of thanksgiving and tell of all His wondrous works, draw them also thither to be edified in their faith and quickened in their love by the ministry of His holy word. They desire to be taught by one who is experienced, and to be instructed of one who is called and holy. And this not apart but in company, that the unity of the doctrine, and the commonness of the feeling, and the unction of true and holy discourse, may compose their troubled spirits, and bring into one their souls, agitated

various ways by the variety of professions and the vicissitudes of life. And the Lord, to provide for this constant and necessary desire of His Church, hath not left it to be ministered unto by any upstart who may judge himself qualified for the same, but appointed men to be set apart to the holy office, and to give themselves wholly to the ministry of the word and to prayer; who are the angels of the churches, the stewards of the mysteries of God, the stars which the Son of man holdeth in His right hand, whose office it is to teach whatever hath been imparted to them by the Spirit of God, and to whose discourse it is the part of the people to listen with an understanding and an attentive ear. Now, though one would think that the hearing of sound preaching, the mere hearing of it, were as bare a disguise as well could be, and as small a footing as well could be for idolatry, yet upon this narrow isthmus will idolatry found its empire, and by his practices prosper, to the annihilation of pure religion out of all the coasts. For there is a form of sound words which from the beginning the Church hath found it necessary to adopt, containing the particulars of a true faith, which soon exalts itself upon the ignorance of the people into a symbol of all religion, the narrow way and strait gate which lead unto life. To hear which reiterated in their ears from Sabbath to Sabbath is the sweet music of the charm, and preaching thus becomes the sign of their idolatry,—orthodox preaching according to the standards of the Church. Beaten out of every refuge, idolatry hath his last hold in this; and from this, that he can make war upon spiritual religion, is well evinced in certain Protestant parts of the Continent, where at this day, with the same doctrines which we hold, and the same simple forms, they rage in violent persecution against all who dare to meet for religious exercises anywhere, at any time, and in any manner than that prescribed by the canons, yea, and push the pious and spiritually-minded to the extremity of imprisonment, confiscation of goods, and banishment from their homes. Now that this idolatry of orthodox preaching, a bare and barren orthodoxy, prevails against the fruitfulness of true doctrine, and stands for the worship of the living and true God, I have no more doubt

than that there is idolatry of saints in Rome, and idolatry of the liturgy in our sister Church. And from the preaching it passeth over to the preacher, upon whom, bare man as he is, the ignorance of a people will fix and fasten as an idol, that they may get the living feelings of their heart debauched from the living God away to a living man, while they debase the homage of their understanding away from the word of God to the airy stuff which comes from the voice of a mere man to the uncircumcised ear of another man. And, O my God, how Thy people are caught away from the beholding of Thy glorious image and the faith of Thine unremoved word, to look upon the countenance of man, and place their reliance upon the empty words of man! Yea, even the people whom God hath called and redeemed do lust after worldly leaders, saying, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas," as if Christ were divided amongst their favourite preachers; of whom to hear them talk, with raving enthusiasm, and with keen jealousy that none other should be preferred before them, with full assurance that they are incarnations of all-perfect truth, you would suppose you heard some Easterns speaking of their guardian genius, or some Papists paying homage to their tutelary saints. You shrink, perhaps, at such a similitude; but if they do not advance our mortal flesh and blood to the region of the sky, to mediate for them at the throne of God, and watch over them with unseen ministry, then do they make our voice, our lame and error-inditing voice, a mediator between their faith and the word of God. Far be it from me to undervalue the worth, nay, the absolute necessity to salvation of an orthodox faith, while I utterly condemn and abominate as creed-worship the empty eulogy of the standards and frequent flattery of the forms of the Church. And in the adorning of the tombs of those who perished in their defence—(the same spirit of idolatry, as in our Lord's time, oft adorns the tomb which erewhile slew the martyr—first slaying him because he tore the idolatry down, then cunningly waiting until the ignorance of the times will allow the founders of the last venerable thing to be made into idols—first their names, then their venerable memorials, and their once-despised tombs)—

I see the natural generation of idolatry. I see nothing but the light of the word and Spirit of God can keep us from running its course over and over again, like the ancient Israelites. It is there in the valley of ignorance. It lurketh in the twilight shades of the mind. It haunts, it hallows the place with a superstitious reverence; and as the spirits of the people travel down into the valley, they come upon the enchanted ground, and cannot be helped off it again save by the redemption of Christ and the operation of the Holy Spirit. Therefore am I zealous, my beloved brethren, over your souls, and I warn you against the idolatry of popular preaching and popular preachers which hath its seat amongst us. Honour that priest whose lips keep knowledge, and be ready to receive the law at his mouth, because it is the word of God; but that talk of ministers, and hasting after favourite preachers, and wrangling of their several merits, and quoting of their scenes and instances, which hath grown so rank in the unpruned garden of true religion, let it not once be named amongst you. Be ye men in understanding, and treat the voice of your minister as a man,—a man of God,—a man sent from God to bear testimony of Christ.

Be not deceived, beloved brethren, it is neither merit in us to preach nor in you to hear the gospel. Woe is unto us if we preach it not; and to you who hear, if it prove not the savour of life unto life, it will prove the savour of death unto death. The preaching of the gospel is indeed the high imperial ordinance of the kingdom of Christ, and the liberty of it is that for which the priest should be ever ready to be offered up. Nevertheless, it is not the kingdom, but only the preparation of the kingdom; it is not the light, but the witness of the light, that by its means all men should believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and receive of Him power to become the sons of God. And though in our Church we maintain preaching upon that pedestal of nobility whereon Christ hath placed it alone for the salvation of those that believe, it is a most sad and fatal issue if ye should ever fall away from Him whom we introduce to you full of grace and truth, and from whose fulness we all receive and grace for grace, to worship them who come out of the wilderness of their own natural

poverty and barrenness at the bidding of God, clothed in rough and ungainly wise, and uttering sharp and piercing and dividing words to awake you from your sleep, and somewhat purify you from your pollutions, to receive the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, the beloved Son of God, in whom He is well pleased. And I would say, moreover, let the priest be careful how he permits idolatry to fasten upon him, however quietly, however insidiously ; let him beware how he receive upon himself one portion of that faithful regard which is wholly Christ's. Yea, for his own sake let him beware how he permitteth such iniquity. For the idolatry of a multitude, even though it call itself religious, is a fickle thing ; and there is only one of two fates for an idol—either to be worshipped, or to be stamped into powder and trodden under foot. Therefore, my soul, come thou not into that secret, but confront the idolatries of the people, and tell them of this to their face, that thou mayst be preserved from the great transgression, and live the faithful servant of thy Lord unto the death. Be thou faithful unto the death, and thou shalt receive a crown of life. And ye, my people, who are accustomed to listen to my ministrations, I expect not your commendations, and I desire them not, as I will not be afraid of your condemnations. It is not to me, but to the truth in my lips that I seek your testimony ; not to the abstract truth, but to the living Truth, who ever liveth to make intercession for you, and even now is in the midst of you. Therefore, if ye ask who or what I am, or if ye be asked thereof, say that I am a voice, nothing but a voice, sent to testify of One who cometh ; and blessed is he who receiveth Him at His coming ! Oh, how absolute, how indefeasible, how unearthly is the dignity of a preacher of the gospel ! How faithful unto God, how fearless of the face of man ! How patient, how persevering, how unyielding, how severe ! He is a rock in the fluctuations of time, and a beacon of light to the spirits of men tossed and overwhelmed by the currents of time. Oh, how sacred is his place, how solemn his vocation, how awful his trust ! Ah ! and the light of our glory will not mingle with the lights of the glory of the earth. The glory of renown, the glory of splendour, the glory of power, the glory of

station,—these are our darkness which are their brightness ; these are our eclipse which are their revelation. Then only are we purely seen in our glorious beauty, unshorn of a beam of our glorious strength, when none of these mists of the earth come between us and you. Our beauty is derived from Christ the Sun of the spiritual firmament, and we borrow of the earth nothing but deformity and obscurity.

Twelve such priests would do the work that is wanted, which a thousand and tens of thousands, bound and fettered as we now are by rules of Church and opinions of people, cannot do. Twelve such priests would overthrow the many-faced Dagon of idolatry, and make his priests to howl from the midst of their darkness, and flee amain from the light which invaded their miserable habitations. And if such priests be not stirred up, who shall fling away the tiny measures in which this age would have the voice of the gospel ministered to them, I say we of the Protestant Churches will become as profitless idolaters of our meagre forms as the Papists are of their stupendous deception. Let religion sleep on contented with its quietness and serenity, and we shall find ourselves a nation of formalists, like the Protestants on the Continent, who have at this day purely less of true religion than the Catholics have. But I trust that the Lord hath purposed better for our beloved land, and that He will stir up men separate from all outward ornament and strength to trust in ; men above the bribes of rank and riches and office, and high above popular interference and condescension to the humours of the people ; men of spiritual strength, yet lively in their strength—severe and self-denied in faith, yet replenished with grace and heavenly odour, with whom to work His work in the latter day, to bring us back again to our first love, and to restore the things which are ready to die. Then shall the daughters of Judah be glad, and the children of Israel shall sing, when the Lord sendeth to them the messengers of the gospel of peace, whose feet upon the mountains are very beautiful, coming to proclaim the glad tidings of Israel's redemption.

May the Lord in His great mercy and infinite long-suffering grant to us, my beloved brethren, to be preserved from all

idolatries, to watch and be sober, for the time is at hand ! “ Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” Little children, keep yourselves from idols ; for even covetousness is idolatry, and there is an idolatry of the word of God, and there is an idolatry of the outward ordinances of religion, and idolatry is everywhere in the valley of spiritual ignorance. Therefore seek ye the light of the word of God and the teaching of His Spirit, and be ye filled with the fulness of spiritual wisdom and understanding, and out of a pure heart and well-contented will bring forth your works in the meekness of love. This is the only safeguard from idolatry, that your life be moved by the Spirit of God dwelling within you, and the law of God written in your hearts ; to which end I do earnestly pray that He may shine into your hearts to give them the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

## VI.

### IDOLATRY OF THE BOOK—THE BIBLE.

**I**T may make many to startle when I tell them that the first point upon which we are at present assailable, and where the enemy hath worked his mines the most effectually, is the Holy Scriptures itself, and that even now the worship of God is hindered in the midst of us by the idolatry of the Bible. Yet we need not start at such an announcement when we remember that the idolatry of the law is that which even now sealet the bondage of the Jews, and that the law was inspired no less than the rest of the Scriptures, and contained within itself the warning of its own insufficiency to save the soul, no less than the book of the New Testament containeth within itself the declaration of its insufficiency to save the soul without the gracious aids of the Spirit of God. Now, it is to be observed that the Jews, who rejoiced in a divine revelation of law, when all the nations around leant to their own understanding and fabulous traditions, were not thereby more liable to the idolatry of the heaven-derived law than we, the Protestant nations, who enjoy an open gospel which to the other nations is sealed or unknown, are liable to the idolatry of that perfect revelation whereof the keeping hath been in great honour committed unto us. For have we not for the sake of this little precious volume destroyed the master-building of a thousand years, swept away the authority of fathers, the decrees of councils, the infallibility of popes, with the most ancient and reverend establishments of former times, questioning and interrogating every tradition, however old and venerable,—be it imposing form, be it decent rite, be it weighty rule, grave doctrine, or solemn sacrament,—“Is it found so written in the book? Is

it found otherwise written in the book?" and, according to the answer, retaining it or dismissing it without further appeal? We have shorn the beams of the glory which encircled the heads of the sainted fathers, and said, "Your sayings are but the opinions of men." We have said to the canons of councils, before which the infallible pope was constrained to bow, "Ye sprang out of the controversial heads, and oft from the hard and proud and bitter hearts of violent and cruel men;" and to the pope, crowned with his diadem of threefold empire, "Thou art Antichrist, the enemy of all good, the child of the devil. How long wilt thou pervert the righteous ways of God?" All this work done by our bold fathers we continue to maintain upon the strength of this little book, upon which also we have constructed a Confession of Faith, and Books of Discipline, and forms of worship, and a manner of church government for ourselves, to every sentence of which we have appended the passages of the book on which they rest, and are in all things founded upon the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. And this little book, upon which we have rested so much for our own souls, we regard as the only hope of the perishing world, which is to break the rocks of the earth as with a hammer, and subvert the rooted superstitions and idolatries of all nations. And there hath been, as it were, from Dan unto Beersheba one combined effort of the saints to send the bul-rush messengers to the ends of the earth, and to put into their mouths the speech of all the nations of the earth. It is both the little palladium of our citadel and our weapon of war, against the brood of ignorance which come up against us like the locusts warping upon the eastern wind. And at this present time we have a double watch to maintain over it, on the one hand from the princes who have now combined against it, or shrink from its righteous glances and gleams of heavenly light; on the other hand, from those amongst ourselves who, while they venerate its outward authority, are defrauding it of its divine wisdom by subjecting it to the mastery of human reason. Under the cloak of which awful sanctity and most polished virtue, think you not that Satan will make it into an idol, as he formerly made an idol of the

serpent of brass which Moses erected in the wilderness, and which Hezekiah, after some centuries, found it necessary to stamp in pieces, for unto his days did the children of Israel burn incense to it?

Now the book, never to be prized enough for these its mighty works unto us and to our fathers, doth contain within itself the safeguard against all idolatry, to which our fathers had diligent respect, and from which if we their children do withdraw our eyes, it will become an idol to us as surely as the body of Moses would have become an idol to the children of Israel, had not the archangel Michael, our Prince, contended for it with Satan, who desired it for his craft, and prevailed to have it buried, no one of the camp knew where, and no one was able to discover. The safeguard against the idolatry of the word of God which it containeth within itself, is the assurance everywhere given that it is not profitable to any blessed uses save as the Spirit of God taketh it and useth it, and worketh with it effectually to the salvation of men and the redemption of the world. Of the new covenant, which was confirmed in the blood of Christ to all His disciples, this is one clause, that they should be all taught of God, from the least even to the greatest. And no sooner was the covenant sealed in the blood of the Surety, than the Holy Ghost descended from on high and instructed the apostles and evangelists in the things of the kingdom, bringing to their remembrance all the words which Christ had spoken, and adding much which He could not speak in their then uncircumcised ears. And these apostles and evangelists, who were anointed with the unction of truth which doth abide, have delivered to us those records of the New Testament, which are the power as well as the wisdom of God. And it is the sound doctrine of all the Reformed Churches that the study of the word without the co-operation of the Spirit is as little able to produce spiritual life within the soul as the sight and study of the visible world is able of itself to beget intellectual life; and that as there is a mind given us of God for receiving the impressions of the sense and digesting them into the forms of understanding, so is there a spirit wrought within us by the Spirit of God for receiving the impressions of

the word, and digesting them into the forms of spiritual being. But the Spirit of God having no visible representation as the word hath, no form of a holy dove, or consecrated oil, the danger is that His needful part should be lost sight of in an unspiritual age, and that the visible form of the word should carry it before the observation of the sense. And just as in philosophy they have been working so for more than a century, deriving all our knowledge and ideas from visible things without any reference to the mind itself, which they have conceited to be like a sheet of paper, passive to receive impressions, whereas she is a most curious mistress of all invisible art to weave the web of knowledge out of the raw materials of observation ; so is there a constant danger lest we should place our chief expectation of spiritual knowledge upon the diligent perusal of the word itself, and forget that a spirit hath to be born within us of the Spirit of God, which, like a mistress of all spiritual art, shall sit at the centre and weave the web of spiritual wisdom out of the revelations which are contained in the word of God.

Now that this safeguard, most clearly perceived by our fathers, and by them constantly presented to view, hath, through the wonderful mastery of things visible over this age, fallen out of the sight of the godly amongst us, and the written word become proportionably more prominent than it ought to be, and in so far become an idol, appears manifest to my mind from the following characteristic features of our days.

First, that the main current of our enthusiasm hath set towards the written word of God to a degree hitherto unexampled in the world ; which would be to my mind the source of unmingled joy and glory, did I witness consentaneous therewith an equal enthusiasm for the preaching of its spiritual doctrines. But when I witness the imperial ordinance of preaching Christ postponed in the estimation of the religious to pleadings for charitable and religious benevolence, to the reading of the liturgy, to public meetings, and other such good inventions of man, and find, moreover, that there never hath been an age in the Church wherein spiritual doctrine was at so low an ebb, and the gifts of the preacher

so little cared about, and the work of preaching so miserably put by ; when I look to the studies of our divines, and see them covered with periodical publications, reports, subscriptions, and such small deer, and find their time apportioned out amongst active occupations, with a small fragment merely for meditation of the word and private discipline of their spirit for the reception, understanding, digesting, and preaching thereof, I hesitate to pronounce that unqualified approbation upon that sign of the times, in which the times delight themselves so much, that the written word is translating into all languages and circulated in all lands. It is a token for good to them ; but to us it is no token for good, if the labour of that ministry of translating and circulating be abstracted from the higher ministry of reading, learning, marking, and inwardly digesting the word. It is amazing how dull we have become to the importance of preaching, by which the Spirit hath most frequently shed Himself abroad in the times of old. The times were when the words of the preacher were spirit and life, and master minds lent their energies to the noble work of this spiritual embassy, and wearied themselves, and wearied their people, and rallied again ; so that in the olden time when a bishop preached, and turned the glass at the end of the hour, the congregation rejoiced with manifest joy that they were to have the music of the glad sound a little longer in their ears. And the enthusiasm hath all passed over from the pulpit to the press, so that methinks our Sunday newspapers, those ministers of Satan, spend more strength and faculty than our Sunday sermons, which were wont to be the ministers of Christ. And, as might be expected, the trust and confidence which heretofore were reposed in this mighty instrument of God have in a good measure failed, from that puny, paltry dwarf which now fills the giant's seat ; whence, despairing of converting men, there has been a great rush of enthusiasm to the converting of children by Bible reading, and to the scattering of tracts, and a thousand other expedients, which, taken together, are not equal to the effect which one speech of the stamp of Latimer or Knox would produce within the land. And they are allowed to make bargains and mer-

chandise of livings. As the Lord liveth, it is the canker-worm of the land, and hath eaten the emerald-greenness of our sister island to a sere and withered leaf. If there were any zeal for the Spirit would that be endured? Old Gilpin, and Archbishop Grindal, and Burnet of Sarum, and such men, would have made the roof of royal palaces to ring again, and royal ears to tingle, rather than such things should have been. But I tell you, the enthusiasm hath all passed over to a bound and lettered book, as if stereotypes could convert the world!

The second evidence and measure of the extent to which this idolatry of the Scriptures hath advanced amongst us, I discern in the notion which now begins to prevail amongst the most pious both of our ministers and people concerning faith, that it is no more than the reception of the truths of revelation into the mind, and their activity thereupon as truths, and that the truth of the Spirit's influence upon our spiritual growth in grace is to be received like any other of the manifold truths which the word of God reveals; that faith is no more than the name for that faculty of the mind which brings us into contact and communion with the truths of religion, as sense is the name for that faculty which communicates with the world. The amazing prevalence of this notion, that faith is no more than the truths believed, and that the truths believed operate like any other truths, by a natural influence, to produce spiritual life, proves to me how much the presence of the Spirit hath departed from our sight in favour of the omnipresence of the word. Now, mark ye well, brethren, that where the true personal Word of God is present, the Spirit is present with Him, and the Father present with both; all being equally necessary and equally present in every act of faith and step of holiness. And when the Spirit hath been overshadowed, the shadow is not zeal for the everlasting Word, but zeal for the written word, and that not as the word, but as a sensible, intellectual, and profitable idol. Now, the true doctrine concerning faith is, that to its production in the soul the Spirit of God must work as effectually as the word of God: or, even further, that the word is the instrument with which the Spirit worketh, and that the word, to be profitable

to redemption, regeneration, and salvation, waiteth for the Spirit to work therewithal; and that we must be born of the Spirit by the seed of the word which liveth and abideth for ever. The Father hath revealed His word, first in an incarnate and now in a written form; but it is as necessary to our salvation that the Father and the Son should reveal the Spirit, not in an incarnate form indeed,—because the law hath been made honourable, and the sacrifice for sin hath been accomplished,—but in a spiritual form, by quickening the spirit of every believer; and upon our flesh He operates at present only to mortify it, and hereafter He shall operate to quicken it likewise, by raising it from the dead, when it shall appear that we are children of the Father, and children of Christ the second Adam, and children of the Spirit. But we seem in the churches to be relapsing into the condition of those disciples mentioned in the Acts, who did not know that there was a Holy Ghost; for we are reducing the doctrine of His operation into one amongst many doctrines which is to be taken up by faith along with the rest: whereas it is not a doctrine amongst many, but the life of every doctrine, in which the Spirit must be present personally, as the Word is present personally, ere it will produce any change upon the heart and life of man. They are converting religion into an objective thing, and the object they have chosen is surely the most worthy one, the written word; but inasmuch as it is objective merely, it is idolatry. Objective it must be, but subjective it must at the same time likewise be; and to make it subjective in us, the Spirit of God must work upon us the power of receiving it, even as the farmer prepareth the soil for the seed which is to be cast therein, or as the mind is prepared, by what means we know not, for the information which is to pass thereinto by the senses. And even as no rules of logic, nor education of masters, nor diligent and wise discipline of self, can avail to make a mind, where, as in idiots, it hath been refused, though they prevail much to bring to perfect health and mature strength the mind which is given; so no study of the Word of God, nor ministration therein from infancy, nor learning thereof from works of learning, nor other form of discipline, can become effectual to the conversion of

the natural and carnal mind into a spiritual mind, until the Spirit give His quickening influence; after which they are both useful and needful for the growth and fruitfulness of that plant which hath been planted. Now if any one would turn this view of faith into licentiousness, by saying, But what availeth it, what mattereth it then, if so be it be all of the Spirit of God? I answer, though only by the way, without entering into the matter at large, that the same love and mercy towards lost sinners, which brought the eternal Word of God to reveal Himself and die for us, is equally disposed, nay, is by covenant to His Son pledged, to reveal the Spirit, and will no more withhold it than a father would bread from his children. He hath given us His best in giving His Son to death, for the Spirit cometh not to die but to quicken life, which is His sweet, pleasant, and proper occupation from eternity, at which He is ever now busy in the hearts of the regenerate, and knocking at the hearts of the unregenerate, to prevail against their sluggishness and natural indifference to His work.

A third form in which the idolatry of the written word expresseth itself, is in the holy—but I call it unholy—notion which they have taken up concerning inspiration: that the very words are inspired, and the writers were but as organs of voice for that word. Where, then, were the sanctification of the writers, if their soul were not in their words? And you will hear shrewd suggestions that even the act of translation hath a certain divine sanctity in it. Thus the Jews proceeded to honour the letter of the sacred book, counting the words and very letters of it, and holding that there was a mysterious sacredness in their very form. And for their idolatry they were permitted for ever to lose the Spirit, which they sought not to find, and were slain by that letter on which they had such reliance. And in the same spirit they require of you at once to believe the book as the word of God, by one act of faith to adopt it, then to read it and bow down before what you read. That is to make the book an idol, and then prostrate your soul unto it. And by so doing you shall make your soul a timorous creature of superstition, or a blind worshipper of sounds and sentences, but never a

child of the Spirit of God. Such notions flow not from orthodox doctrine, which saith unto every man, Read this word with what persuasion of its divine authority you presently have, and affect not more than you really have, for that is falsehood or superstition, which God abhorreth. Bring to it the faculties of mind which you presently have, and peruse it with the desire to be enlightened in the deep things which it containeth, and the Spirit will open your soul to understand it more and more, and dispose your heart to receive it more and more, and constrain your will to obey it more and more; and as your soul grows into its confirmation more and more, you will believe it more and more, and your faith in its inspiration will grow with your spiritual growth, and strengthen with your spiritual strength. What portion of the Holy Spirit is in the written word, he only shall be a judge of who hath the same inspiration with Himself. It is the Spirit in us which discerneth the Spirit in the word. And then it is not letters and sounds that we discern, but the things signified, the ideas revealed, which beget in us such mighty revolutions. This also, like the others, is an effort to infix in the outward object of the written word all that is necessary to our salvation, to concrete the Spirit into matter, if I may so speak, and have the whole efficacy of the God-head under our eye, or our understanding, or some other of our proper faculties, and to make religion consist in the right use of that outward thing. But, no! The Lord hath better determined that it shall never be so, and hath kept the finishing of salvation still with Himself, in order that He may have a purchase over God-avoiding man, to draw him to the only portion of his blessedness. Therefore He will not concrete His Spirit in the matter of a book, nor make Him subject to any given formula of man's resolution, simple or subtle; but as the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh nor whither it goeth, so hath He resolved that it shall be with His Spirit, that men may learn to draw near unto His throne, and entreat the perfection of His gifts from that grace from which they have derived so much. And all that He hath done for our race is but the argument and assurance that He will do more,

and will not stay till He have completed the work ; but as the former part hath been done to the world in general, the latter part remaineth to be done for each man in particular, and we must apply ourselves to Him as those that would be saved, in order to receive to ourselves the personal application, and full possession, and perfect blessedness, and infinite profit of that which now hangeth shining over the whole race as a common dispensation—a great sign of mercy suspended in the heavens, more glorious than the rainbow, which telleth to all posterity that the seed-time and the harvest-time of spiritual fruit, shall never cease to bless the generations of man.

There are to our minds many more manifestations of the tendency of this generation to magnify the importance of the written word, and undervalue the importance of the Spirit's application thereof, from which cometh that dexterity in quoting the letter of the Scriptures, and poverty in its spiritual interpretation, which mark the preachers and the believers of these times. Where are the rich outpourings of doctrine—where the large manifestations of varied truth—where the unfoldings of the deep mysteries of texts—where the endless discourses, endless because the soul of the preacher was boundless of spiritual thoughts and feelings—where the huge volumes of fat and savoury food to the spirits of believers, which rejoiced the former ages of the Church? and yet there are tenfold more Bibles circulated, and tenfold more talk about the Bible ; but it is the book, the volume of the book, which hath filled us with these declamations—not the glory of the Angel of the book—not the eternal Word, of whom the written word is but the outward form for all the species, but who must dwell with the soul of each of you with His Spirit, and conform you in such wise as that His written word shall be to you spirit and life. The written word is but the raw food, which the indwelling Word and Spirit giveth us spiritual power to feed upon, and enableth us to speak out of the fulness of a refreshed spirit, and to rejoice in the enlargement and activity of a free and immortal spirit.

Doubt therefore, brethren, have I none that we are in the way of converting the outward written word into an idol, as the Jews converted their outward written law into an idol, and

that this evil hath heavily pressed, and is even now heavily oppressing the Protestant Churches; and that from this it hath arisen that so much store is set in these times by the circulating and translating of the word, and so little to the stout and able preaching of the word; also that so much importance is given to the education of children in the Scriptures, and so little to the convincing of full-grown men by the mighty power of the preaching of the word, of which it is well said in our Catechism that it is the chief means in the hands of the Spirit for the convincing and converting of men. If I were to characterise the present great and noble exertions of the Protestant Church, I would say of them that they were a world of plans and expedients to make the word effectual to the salvation of men, but which seemed in no proportion to their extent, because it was never intended by God that His word should be so effectual. But when I shall witness as strenuous and sedulous endeavours to seek out children of the Spirit for preaching the word, as much boldness to speak against the children of the world who usurp the high places of this ministry,—when I shall hear not in word, but see in deed, that the Holy Spirit is looked to for all the increase, and that in this dependence all expediences, prayers, and managements, and solicitations of the high and noble, and traffic with the vanity and self-importance of men, and human wit and wiles, are supplanted in all our works by spiritual trust, then shall I be sure that the way of the Lord is mightily preparing, and that He is going forth as a man of war to convert the nations.

## VII.

### IDOLATRY OF THE SACRAMENTS.

**H**AVING guarded you against the idolatry of those simple forms whereby we express our common worship of God and faith in His word, I would now proceed to do the same with respect to the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which, being addressed directly unto the sense, have in all ages afforded the readiest inlet, and are at present the strongest hold of idolatry. And I feel it of more consequence at this time to do so, as this is to us the Sabbath of preparation before partaking the sacrament of the Supper. Therefore, my beloved brethren, that all of us here present may be guarded against the devices of Satan to convert these two most pregnant means of grace into means of delusion, and that we in particular who are preparing our souls for another act of self-dedication unto the Lord, may be well and fully informed concerning that which we purpose in our hearts, let us lay our heart and mind to consider the subject of these two mysteries; and may the Lord grant us the illumination of His Holy Spirit, that we may speak of them according to their true and deep meaning!

The two sacraments, being properly understood, take a most high place in the system of Christian truth, representing to the very life the great master-ideas of revelation: the former revealing to the sense of sight the doctrine of our sinfulness and pollution by nature, and our purification by the blood of Christ, with the doctrine of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as the agents co-operating in that blessed work; the latter revealing to the still more immediate and incorporating sense of eating and drinking, the doctrine that our

spiritual nourishment and growth in grace proceed solely by the faith and indwelling virtue of the Word of God, whose body was broken and whose blood was shed for us; the one expressing to the sense the doctrine of the new birth, the other the doctrine of the new life. Besides being the ever-enduring monument of these great mysteries, and their manifestation in the sight of the world, they are the outward signs and symbols and occasions of spiritual grace bestowed by the Spirit of God upon those who receive them with a spiritually-enlightened mind, and in the exercise of unfeigned faith. The former being received by an adult who hath believed in Christ and desires to be baptized into His name, doth make assurance to him that his sins are taken away by the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world, and becomes the occasion, I make no doubt, of his receiving not only the remission of his sins, but the participation of the gifts of the Spirit which He purchased by His death. For by our Lord it was never intended that the baptism with water and with the Spirit should be separated from one another; and in the beginning they were not separated; and if now they be separated to any one it is his want of faith, his formality, his idolatry, that makes the separation, which, I believe in my heart, is never to those in whom true faith is present. At the same time we are not to conclude, with the Pharisees of these days, because it is the sign and occasion of these invisible gifts and graces of the new birth, that the gifts and graces cannot come without the exhibition of the sign, which truly were to bind the Spirit to a rule who is not bound by any law, but free, according to that fundamental principle of His operation, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Being administered to the infants of believing parents, it is to those faithful parents the pledge of God's love and care over their seed, and the fulfilment of His promises, which are to them and to their children; and it signifies, that as God hath made the natural life of the infant dependent upon their natural affections, so hath it pleased Him to make

the spiritual life of the infant dependent upon their spiritual affections, and holdeth them, in the plenitude of their whole renewed man, bound to watch over this offspring which by natural birth is declared the offspring of their members—by baptism declared the offspring of the Spirit which dwelleth in their members. And while it serves such offices to the believing parents, I believe also that upon the child there doth descend the inheritance of the blessing, not certainly pre-determining it necessarily to salvation, but assuring its parents that they may in hope, yea, in assurance, train it in the nurture and admonition of the Lord ; and assure the little one, when it is capable of knowledge and of faith, that it hath a Father in heaven who is to its spirit more fatherly than any father or mother on earth can be to its body. Which mighty purchases over the relation of parents and children are secured by the ordinance of infant baptism, without undoing the necessity of faith to any true heavenly gift ; but they are entirely lost by the dogma of adult baptism, which unhinges and dislocates from religion the relation of parents and children, and abolisheth the use of the promises which bind them together. Such offices of salvation serveth baptism to those who partake of it in faith.

Now, the Supper of the Lord is a mystery of still greater depth and more pregnant grace, and therefore addresseth itself to a closer faculty of our nature than any of the five senses ; even that mysterious faculty hidden from all discovery, whereby the body taketh hold of the dead matters of meat and drink, and converteth them into a living union with itself, sucking out of dead things the strength of life, laying all nature under tribute, and taking tithes of everything which groweth out of the earth. And though two substances only, bread and wine, be taken,—the former the staff, the latter the joy of bodily life,—there can be no doubt that they are, like the stone and the earth, but the signs whereby she taketh seisin, as they say in Scotland, of the whole estate of inanimate nature. Whereby is signified that as the body, in that act of eating bread and wine, taketh possession of the whole outward creature, and having eaten of the bread and wine, doth incorporate them with itself, and so continue the

stream of life with all its enjoyments; so doth the new creature born within us at the sacrament of baptism take full possession of the body and blood of Christ, which are the elements of a new creation, and incorporate them with itself, and so continue the stream of its new life, with all the spiritual enjoyments thereof. This visible world before the fall was the body of the Word of God, as truly as that holy thing which was born of the Virgin was the body of the Word of God after the fall. And in eating and drinking of these elements which He had created, the animal life of our first parents was in communion with the Word of God, in whom was the life from the beginning; even as in thinking of them they saw the Word of God revealed in every relation of outward nature unto themselves, and in the laws and properties of their own soul. And thus animal life, and intellectual life, and spiritual life, were in them the varieties of our common communion, held by diverse organs of their being, and yielding diverse entertainment, but preserving through the whole web of sensitive cogitation and feeling, one constant communion with Him in whom was life, and the life was the light of man. But after the fall, this communion was clean subverted, and a chasm interposed between animal life and Him in whom it lived; between intellectual life and Him by whose light we reasoned and thought. There is no longer the Creator, the Word of God, within us nor without us. Creation is still a form of Him, but we cannot read it. Therefore had He to take another form, and a body was prepared for Him. He became flesh and dwelt amongst us, full of grace and truth; and we beheld His glory as of the only-begotten of the Father. And to them that believed gave He power to become the sons of God, who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. His body was the only sinless thing which had been in the world since the fall; the only thing pure and holy, undefiled and separate from sin. Therefore it is the earthly seed, the manifested germ of a new creation, the parent of a new family, the source of a new light, the spark of a new life. It stands to the body of man in that relation in which the unfallen creature stood to the body of Adam. Now, the end

of the Supper being to give to the believer such a possession of the Word of God as Adam had in Paradise,—a full and total, not a partial possession of Him,—it was appointed to stand in meat and drink, as well as in words, that with every faculty, corporeal and mental and spiritual, the new creature might embrace Him in whom it lives and moves and hath its being. There are words for his spiritual understanding: “This is my body broken; this is my blood shed.” There are declarations also for their faith: “Broken for you; shed for the remission of sins.” And if the spirit had been the only object of the redemption, it would have stopped there; but the body is also to be redeemed. Therefore there is a revelation to the faith also of the sense, by eating and drinking. So that it is as much an eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood, as it is an understanding of His words and a believing of His promises. And I can say I eat His flesh and drink His blood, as properly as I can say I comprehend His words, and believe His promises. But in all cases it is by faith I do so. I do not naturally eat His flesh, neither do I by natural understanding comprehend the Word, nor by natural trust realise the promise. But by the exercise of faith I realise the promise, comprehend the Word, eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man. It is an act of faith in each part, and equally an act of faith in every part. But it is such an act of faith as is not in any other ordinance completed. All other acts of faith are partial, but this is of the whole man, body and soul and spirit, such as Adam gave in Paradise, and such as, being entertained at the sacrament of the Lord’s body, unites us to Him, body and soul and spirit, in as entire and complete union as Adam was united to Him before he fell.

From this short exposition of the spirit of the two sacraments, it is most manifest that they, in a still higher sense than the other ordinances of religion, belong to the faithful, and to the faithful alone, and therefore by distinction they are denominated sealing ordinances, because they not only signify but seal the new birth and new life of their spirits by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. The world, as distinguished from the Church which is chosen out of

the world, may feel that they have a right to the preached gospel, which came to call not the righteous but sinners unto repentance, and even the natural man may have drawings of spirit towards God in prayer and praise, though as was shewn there can be no true spiritual worship save from those who are born of the Spirit ; but in these sacraments the world can have no shadow of interest, seeing they are the very wall of separation which fenceth off the world from the Church. They are the outward form of the distinctiveness of the Church—to her the sign of her having been chosen out of the world, to the world the sign of her yet unredeemed unregenerate state. Take away these two sacraments, and there is no visible Church ; make them common, and the same evil effect will follow. Preserve them, and the Church hath an objective existence in the eyes of men, can be observed, can be perused, can be judged, can be talked of. Destroy them, and you may still retain an ordained clergy, an observed Sabbath, a preached gospel, a form and ritual of worship, but you have no Church, and having no visible Church, you have no ecclesiastical polity, no citizenship, no discipline, no brotherhood, no Christian communion of any kind. You may preserve a sound and orthodox creed, and faithfully maintain it, but your practical sentiments and the spirit of your private intercourse will be worldly. There will be, there can be no Christian community where no endeavour is made to preserve the sealing ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper to those who are called and faithful and chosen.

Therefore, I say, the world, that is, the unconverted unspiritual world, hath no concern of any kind with these two ordinances of religion ; and if a worldly man without faith, lively appropriating faith, do bring his infant to the waters of baptism, and make to the minister in a formal way those declarations and professions which are appointed to be taken by the Church of every one who seeketh that high privilege, yet have in his conscience no light of spiritual knowledge, and in his heart no abiding principle of faith, in his spirit no unction from the Holy One,—then deriveth he any profit from the sacraments ? He deriveth that profit spiritually which Ananias and Sapphira did who lied to the Holy Ghost ; or which the

priests derived who offered strange incense before the Lord. And doth his child derive any? I say not but that God may hear the prayers of the Church for the child, and may withhold the strong threatening against the seed of the profane. The Lord may hear the faithful prayer of His Church, and thereby be withheld from bursting out upon the faithless parent. Yea, He may honour His ordinance though profaned by unbelieving priest, unbelieving parent, and unbelieving people. But I see no reason to expect such singular dispensations of grace. I see every reason to expect the contrary dispensation of wrath and indignation. Again, if any profane person without the light of knowledge, or the life of faith, sit down at the Lord's table, and take into his hand the symbols of His broken body and shed blood, I have apostolical authority for saying he eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, not discerning the Lord's body. And it is not otherwise to be imagined, then, that the Lord who set a bound and a fence about Mount Zion, and who made His tabernacle very holy, and the ark of His testimony three times holy, should not around this ark of the New Testament, where the memorials of our great paschal offering are laid up, draw a spiritual sanctity, and set a spiritual fence and bound, out of pity to the world, lest they should break through to gaze upon, or to handle the holy things, and I should burst forth upon them, saith the Lord. And doubt there can be none, that when any one out of curiosity, or because others have done the like, or from any other unworthy motive, doth enter wilfully within the fence which God hath placed around the mount of ordinances, he is visited, spiritually visited, yet not less really though spiritually, with certain present and immediate punishments, whereof not the least, if not the greatest, is that he is so far forgotten of the Spirit of God and left to himself, as that he can look upon the symbols of the crucified Son of God without any spiritual emotion, and eat of them without any spiritual profit. Such callousness in the act of nearest closest communion is perhaps the sorest punishment which God can inflict. They have eyes, but they have not seen; ears, but they have not heard; hearts, but they have not understood; yea, they have tasted the fatness of God's house, but have not been refreshed,

and sitten under the banner of His love, but their souls have not been entertained. They have been dead as a stone, hard as the millstone ; they have been tried with the last act of mercy, and they have been proof against it ; they have mocked the holy sacrament, and are not ashamed ; they have counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and they are not confounded ; spiritual darkness hath settled down upon them. They are in the shadow of death, and they shall not be delivered.

But while I thus speak, judge me not as if I spake with cruelty or hardness of heart to those that are without. I do but speak the solemn truth, which is always the most merciful message you can deliver unto those who are in error or in doubt. And it is the greatest mercy so to declare the truth. And cursed is he before God, and cruel is he to his fellows, and most faithless watchmen are they around our Zion, who mark not these her bulwarks and high tower unto the world, that they rush not on and perish not. And the Church is well-nigh unto rejection which doth not maintain this distinctiveness with great carefulness in the sight of all the people. For why ? that the people may be cast off ? No ; but that the people may be taught that they are keeping off from salvation. That the people may be excluded by an iron gate from entering into the ark ? No ; but that they may be taught the gate of faith, by which alone they can enter in. In mercy to the people, in loving-kindness to the unbelieving people, I would keep the marches of the Church distinct, that they may know whether they are of the Church or not of the Church, whether they are of the world or of Christ,—that they may be hindered from confusing and intermingling all things sacred and profane,—that the light may be still lighted up, to which, happily, in the storm and trouble of their souls they may look,—that the city of refuge may still remain with its sacred wall around it,—that the brazen serpent may still be lifted up in the centre of the camp. Which good lessons, all which blessed opportunities and occasions, and constant admonitions, the world doth lose wherever the wall of the Church is broken down by the commonness of the sacraments, and the Church as a real object is removed from the sight of men.

If there be peace in the face of the Church, or hope or refreshment, it can only be known and seen by preserving these ordinances distinct.

For want of solemn declarations of the truth concerning the sacraments, and for want of care to exhibit the distinction of the visible Church from the world, innumerable errors have sprung up amongst us, and the sacraments have come to be regarded as having in themselves a mysterious virtue to take away our sins. The sacrament of baptism, upon the one hand, is regarded as equivalent to regeneration, or the new birth. That is, the new birth of the Spirit is made to inhere in an outward sign, and can at any time be brought to any one at the bidding of a regularly-ordained minister of the Church; after which, confirmation strengthens the infant life of the soul; after which, the sacrament seals it, and being from time to time regularly partaken the work of our salvation is completed and done. Such is the practical faith of thousands amongst us; to overthrow which the short and easy method is simply to declare, that without living faith these sacraments are not only no benefit but a great evil to the soul. And if you be asked what faith meaneth, you can tell them that it meaneth something different from honesty, from honour, from respectability, from formality, from almsgiving, even a heart and soul and life devoted unto God, and an inward being which the world cannot know, and cannot but persecute. Set a fence around the ordinances, and write up the perils of breaking through the fence. Shew the spiritual meaning of it, the exalted faith, the holy discipline, the heavenly discourse of those who partake it. And not only speak thereof, but act thereon, and debar, by the high authority of a minister of the sacraments, whosoever with unclean hands would lay hold thereof; and if they will oblige you to admit such, resign your ministry rather than in your hands it should become futile, faithless, and injurious. For these indiscriminate mobs which come together to handle the emblems of our Lord's body are far more hurtful than profitable to the true Church. I would rather see churches of a dozen or a score in private houses, as in the apostolic times, meeting together in a pure mind to partake of the communion, than see every splendid cathedral in the island filled with the in-

discriminate population of the country to go through the ceremony of the sacrament. For virtue the sacrament hath, else it would never have been instituted so strictly and manifested sensibly. Every one knows that it hath virtue of some kind or other, and seeing it is the most solemn of all Christian ordinances, they consider rightly that it must have the highest virtue of all. Now if this virtue be not connected with inward spiritual condition, and removed from outward visible circumstances, the uninformed people must conclude that it is connected with the outward in some way or other; and having done their alms, or maintained their fasting days, or abstained from some of their indulgences, or done that outward thing which they conceive the most religious, they come in the full and sure expectation of deriving that high grace and heavenly virtue which they conceive to reside in the sacraments rightly and regularly performed. And hence the reason that at the high festivals of the Church the communion is thronged, because the additional holiness of the outward time addeth to the necessary holiness of the act, which is enhanced thereby and will count further. And hence the desire to receive the sacrament as the pledge of reconciliation between friends, as the pledge of loyalty to the Church, as the preparation for death, and on every other outward occasion in which a little more religiousness is present. Do I allude in these things to any Church? No; I allude to all Churches. It is in our Church; it is in our sister Church; it is in all dissenting Churches. For it is the natural idolatry of the human heart, the pharisaical formality of all worldly religion, the aversion of the mind to spiritual worship, nay, our total incapacity for it until we are born again of the Spirit. But though it be present in all Protestant Churches as a practical evil, it is not present in them as a principle. In order to disclaim it our Church hath taken a form to herself, and begins every communion by fencing the table with a distinct account of those who should and those who should not partake the ordinance. And no one is admitted to partake thereof who hath not a token to shew that he hath been judged worthy by the minister and elders of the Church. Our sister Church disclaims it, and her communion service is one of the most perfect expo-

sitions of the sacrament which is to be found. And all the bodies which have dissented from us have generally made the laxness of our communion one great principle of their dissent. What remains, therefore, to protect the Churches from inroad of the world, and to protect the world from eating and drinking judgment to itself, but that we the ministers should be faithful to our Saviour, and to the Reformers of our several churches, and present boldly the true elements of the sacraments, and carry into effect that which we preach, by exhortation, admonition, instruction, and, if need be, remonstrance and hindrance. Therefore, beloved brethren, let me conclude by laying before you in few words, the character of those who are prepared according to the preparation of the sanctuary for this holy sacrament.

"It is required," saith our Catechism, "of them that would worthily partake of the Lord's Supper, that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body ; of their faith to feed upon him ; of their repentance, love, and new obedience, lest coming unworthily they eat and drink judgment to themselves." Than this I can set forth nothing more comprehensive, or more simple ; and I request your perusal of the fuller exposition of it which is given in the Larger Catechism of our Church.

First, you must have knowledge to discern the Lord's body in the elements of bread and wine, and faith to feed upon Him ; for, as hath been said, they address the faith, not the sense. They are not really the body and blood of Christ, otherwise there would be no need of faith to receive them, but barely sense. And hence the horrid error of transubstantiation, which makes them very flesh and very blood, and requires nothing but a mouth to receive and a body to incorporate them,—sensualising the holy sacrament, and making this great mystery of faith into a matter of mere eating and drinking. They are the body and blood of Christ to the eating of faith, not of sense ; as the word is the word of Christ to the hearing of faith, and not of sense. Therefore, if you have not faith, faith in all its life and exercise,—that is, a soul wholly desirous of Christ, and eager to devour His very essence and become substantiated with Him,

so as to have the fellowship of all His sufferings and the fellowship of His resurrection,—you are not able to feed upon Him. It may be to your understanding a demonstration of high and solemn truths; it may be to your sensibility a lively presentation of the most blessed death which was accomplished at Jerusalem; it may be to your devotion a help, and a stirring up to your mind by way of remembrance: or it may be a piece of formality, or it may be an act of superstition, and seal of delusion; but without faith it will be no act of spiritual nourishment and growth in grace. Therefore, I exhort you, brethren, to examine yourselves of your knowledge to discern the Lord's body, and your faith to feed upon Him.

And if you wish to be certified more fully of this faith, then follow out the counsel of the Church, and examine yourselves farther of your repentance, love, and new obedience.

Of your repentance; that is, not how many sins you have suspended for the last week or the last month, in the view of this ordinance, but whether you have put off the old man with his corruptions and lusts, and are ashamed of your former conversation in the days of your ignorance; whether sorrow hath taken hold of you because of your sins, and horror because of all your iniquities; whether the Spirit of Christ hath convinced you of sin in the inward parts, and taught you the exceeding breadth of the divine law, and slain your pride, and brought your self-sufficiency to an end, and taught you the nakedness of your good works, so that with truth you can lay your hand upon your heart and say, This heart of mine is full of murders, adulteries, thefts, false witness; in these members of mine dwelleth no good thing. I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Examine yourselves of your new obedience; not how many acts of self-denial or penance you have undergone; not how many reformations of life you propose, which projections or retrospections are but another form of Satan's delusions. I tell you, though you had all the good works in the Pope's treasury, which have been done by all the saints in the calendar, they were only like the relics of these saints, so many dead men's bones. Out upon such deceptions! You must

know that it is not in you, nor of you, nor in nor of all men, to do any work that is able to stand for itself before the Lord. In Adam we all have sinned, and in Adam we all are dead. Therefore are our works called dead works; and of Christ's blood it is one of the first good offices to cleanse the conscience from the defilement of all such. For the conscience they do defile to such a degree, that it approveth of that which it ought to nauseate, loves that which it should hate, and offers to God with satisfaction that which with detestation He abhors. Be not deceived, my beloved brethren. That which is holy is born of God, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; and every good work, or the goodness which is in any work, the righteousness, the truth, and the mercy, are of the seed of the word planted in us by the Holy Ghost, and for which the Holy Ghost hath made our souls prepared. Therefore is it called *new* obedience, because it is the fruit of the new birth,—the activity of the new man which is created in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. Hence the sacrament of baptism must precede the sacrament of the Supper of the Lord, both outwardly and inwardly; that is, the faith of baptism, by which we receive the blessing of the new birth, must precede the faith of the Lord's Supper, by which the new creature is refreshed and nourished with his proper food, the body and the blood of Christ. This is the obedience to which you are to look; the obedience of the spirit, not of the letter: the obedience of the quickened spirit, not of the living soul; the obedience of the heart, not of the members; the obedience which is with the will, not that which is against the will; the obedience of the law of the mind, not the obedience of the law written in ordinances.

Finally, you must examine yourself of your love to Him who bowed the heavens and came down, and darkness was under His feet; who took you from a fearful pit and the miry clay, establishing your way; to Him who bare your sins in His own body on the tree; who was wounded for your transgressions, who was bruised for your iniquities, and by whose stripes you are healed; of Him who ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, and receiving gifts for you, yea,

even for the rebellious, that God might dwell amongst us, and who hath given us the earnest of the Spirit, and sealed us with the Spirit of promise. For without love to Christ,—who, though in the form of God, humbled Himself to the death of the cross,—abiding and engrossing love, a uniting and incorporating love, like the love of women to their husbands, for here the love of the Husband of the Church was stronger than the love of women ; without such an embracing and soul-possessing love of Christ, the Spirit will be fruitless, every grace will dwarf and decline away like the beauty of the earth at the approach of winter. For He is the Sun of righteousness, the life, the heat, the nourishment of the spiritual state, and without Him we are nothing but fruitless cumberers of the ground. If we abide in Him we shall bear much fruit ; if we abide not in Him, we cannot bear fruit, and are fit only to be cast out and trodden under foot of man.

May the Lord grant you to find yourselves full of all these fruits of the Spirit, that we may be a goodly and a holy company, meet to offer up spiritual sacrifices by our great High Priest unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us, and called us, and chosen us to be a holy nation, a nation of holy priests to offer up strong cryings and intercessions for the whole earth, that it may be saved.

## VIII.

### ON INTELLECTUAL LIFE.

**T**HOUGH we propose to consider the varieties of natural life under the three divisions of sensual, intellectual, and moral, it is not that we ever find any man wholly given up to the senses, or wholly abstracted from them to intellectual pursuits, or wholly perfected in moral feeling and conduct. No such abstractions of human character do or can exist, men being composed of all the three in different proportions. We take the distinction from the preponderance of one or other of these three parts, the senses, the reason, or the heart,—to either of which, according as men chiefly devote themselves, they pass into a new sphere of existence, which we propose to examine and compare with spiritual life, into which we are born by the word and Spirit of God. The great evil and defect of sensual life is its forgetfulness of God in the midst of all the gratifications in which it abounds, and there it stands directly contrasted with spiritual life, which cannot lose sight of Him in the greatest privations to which it can be exposed. And hence it comes to pass, that people living in the midst of worldly enjoyment are not brought to reflect upon God by an increase of His gifts, which acts like fuel to the flame, but by the obscuration of their joys in sickness, the eclipse of them by death, or the diminution of them by misfortune ; so that the only hope of the gay, fashionable world, whereof this city is the rendezvous, is from sickness, or age, or decayed fortune. While God is kind to them, and nature stands them good, there is almost a moral certainty that they will carry on their God-forgetting course. Sensual men are of that lowest constitution of being which can only be bettered

by the lash. Good treatment makes them worse. They must be beaten into duty with many stripes of an angry providence; in which I pray you to remark a wonderfully kind disposition of God's government. It is the nature of this evil to engender its own remedy. The tendency of sensual life is to waste out the means of gratification. Their extravagance swallows riches up like a wasteful whirlpool, which brings them often to a stand in the midst of their days. This is an opportunity sent by God for cure and deliverance, but by their perversity it is often converted into a season of desperation. Again, frequently nature grows surfeited, and falls into meagre indigestion of sensual pleasures, grows full of weariness, sickness, and calls for a recruiting time of repose and silence, which is another favourable opportunity for a cure. So that even in the lowest, most debased life of sense there is, by the great indulgence and tender mercy of our God, a tendency in things to right themselves. And if, at these favourable seasons for throwing off the chains of sense, the physician of the diseased mind were besought for counsel, instead of the physician of the body being besought to bolster up nature for a new encounter, we would not despair, as now we do, that the sensual classes of the community, which are generally its richest, highest classes, might be brought under the power of spiritual life. Oh, how those ranks we are wont to envy as the favoured ones of Providence are to be pitied for the distance at which they stand from salvation, and the hard remedies by which alone they are to be converted!

Here I leave this subject of sensual life for the present, in order to proceed to my second theme of weighing intellectual life in the balance with spiritual life.

Intellectual or rational life I place in the cultivation of the powers and faculties of the mind, as I place sensual life in the cultivation of the bodily affections. Its food is knowledge, learning is its discipline, and wisdom is its reward. Its business at home is with thought, its excursions abroad are with contemplation, its property is the sum total of recorded truth, and its legacy is the new truth which it can record for those that are to live after. It liveth in the

recorded past, it liveth also with the unseen future, and it stretcheth its being over the world from pole to pole. There is nothing in nature more sublime than this life of the mind. It is the true distinction between man and the lower creatures, as sensual life is their common tie. And it is a great recovery to draw a man from wallowing in the mire of sense, to purify himself at the fountain of reason and truth. It is a great advance in human nature when it can be enamoured of books, which are images of the soul, more than with the colours and beauty of outward forms. Intellectual pleasure, in whatever it consists, whether in discourse, or in eloquence, or in argument for truth, and from whatever source derived, from works of imagination, of taste, of pure reason, or of experimental science; from history, from poetry, or from philosophy,—this pleasure is truly noble and honourable to man, and never fails to elevate and refine the pleasures of sense, and to make us in a considerable degree, sometimes altogether, independent of them.

In ancient times this life of reason and thought was held in such high esteem that, for its sake, the wisest and greatest of men were content to set at naught the conveniences and luxuries of sensual life, and live on the most frugal fare: they became dead, or almost dead, to the distinctions of bodily pleasure and pain, and placed their enjoyments in the state of the mind within. They did in a manner elope from the body and the physical world, in order to wed themselves for life and for death to the company of the soul. And those stoics, and cynics who had such strength of purpose, and such devotion to their better part, are worthy of the highest honour, even from us Christians, seeing they knew not the true God to whom to offer their sacrifice, and in the absence of divine knowledge paid their deference and tribute to virtue and the perfection of the soul, which are the best similitudes of God that natural reason hath access to. But now that we know the most excellent attributes of the Divine Mind, its holiness, its bounty, and its unsearchable riches of mercy,—now that we know His most noble works of power and love, the populous earth, the wondrous deep, and the mighty host of the sky, the heaven of heavens, with all

the spiritual essences which inherit these,—it indicates a sad degeneracy of taste, and bespeaks a debased tone of mind, to turn from the admiration and pursuit of His most worthy attributes, from the devout study and adoration of His being, and performance of all His will, from this to turn to the admiration of our own souls, and the adoration of that imperfect knowledge and virtue which it is given man by his own strength to attain to. We are not now as the ancients were; our eyes have seen, our ears have heard, what they desired to see and to hear, but were not permitted. We know the great Spirit of the universe, the perfection of all wisdom, and the fountain of all intelligence, whom they knew not, but eagerly desired to know. They sought the nearest resemblance of Him they could find—the soul of man in its most perfect state; they called it virtue, they honoured it as the chief good, and paid unto it the homage of their heart. And in preferring this to stocks and stones and obscene fictions of the Godhead, they proved themselves worthy of great approbation, and, I doubt not, had the approbation of God for their enlightened preference. But we have seen, or if we have not seen we are privileged to peruse, the image of the living and the true God, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person—the adorable and unchangeable Jehovah, who dwelleth in the light, who formerly dwelt in clouds and thick darkness. Nor are we ignorant of human nature and its imperfections, that we should any longer bow before it. We know how the gold hath grown dim, and the fine gold of primeval manhood is changed, is defiled, and mixed with the dross of sin and corruption, and we can look upon the best patterns of virtue the world hath seen, and mark off by the line of God's holy law their incompleteness in every proportion. How base, then, for us to forsake the Perfect One and adore the imperfect, fallen, and debased creature,—to neglect divine understanding and follow as the summit of our ambition mere human understanding,—to prefer human nature to the nature of the invisible God!

Nevertheless it is the custom of intellectual men who give no heed to spiritual life thus to degrade themselves from the

perception of God to the perception only of their own thinking selves. As the sensual man giveth his adoration to the objects of sense, or to his own bodily senses which perceive the same, and finds no place for God within his soul, and no evidence of God without, but is engrossed and benighted in corporeal darkness; so the intellectual man, who converseth with thoughts and imaginations of the spirit, doth generally become enamoured of these, or of the men who awaken them, or of the books wherein they are stored. And, alas! he thinketh little of God, who made the spirit capable of these intellectual relishes, and furnished giant spirits to dress out these banquets of the soul which books contain within their silent folded leaves. And oh! the high priests of poetry and the princes of philosophy, the mighty masters of eloquence and the enchanters in the world of melody and song, the magicians of the arts, who with their tiny instruments preserve from oblivion holy and heroic deeds, or fashion the forms of beautiful and noble nature, or lift up on high the roofs and domes of everlasting palaces and temples,—all these master-spirits of the earth, who owe their Creator such exalted reverence for His distinguished gifts, are every one beset with the strongest passion for self-exaltation; they stand evermore upon the brink of self-idolatry, and rarely, most rarely, do they escape from plunging into that snare and condemnation of the devil. They form a beau-ideal, a certain immaterial idol of the mind, each in his several walk of genius, to which they breathe the aspirations of their glowing love, and devote the energy of their scheming ambition. And if haply in that province some mighty man hath arisen in the days of old, who sitteth in his lofty shrine overlooking the darkness and mist of antiquity which hath covered all his compeers,—a Homer, a Plato, a Demosthenes, an Angelo, a Raphael, a Palladio,—then they make them or their works the object of their idolatry; they talk of them more than of God, they think of them more than of God, they prostrate their genius before them, which they prostrate not before God, and they acknowledge them as their masters, their inspirers, who breathed into them the soul of genius, acknowledging God no more than if He had

no hand whatever in the creation and accomplishment of themselves or of the sage and great men whom they admire. Ah! how I wander sad and melancholy among these lettered and glorious men, to behold their spirits drifted from their proper course and shipwrecked from their haven of rest. I have dwelt in universities, and listened to the discourses of learned and scientific men, but I profess, before God, there was no breath of piety or acknowledgment rendered unto God in all their liberal and enlightened discourse. I have feasted my spirit with the poets of modern times, and, excepting one or two, they are as undevout as those who wrote before the birth of Christ. Naturalists, that is they who explore the works of God, are as dry of spiritual refreshment as the hard and withered specimens which they bring from foreign parts. Your master-critics would be ashamed to have ado with religious cant. Your statesmen of note hold saintship in derision. Your artists think more of the Olympic Jove, of the Madonna and infant Saviour, than they do of God, and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent. The temples in which they worship are no less various than the objects of their worship. Some pay their homage to that which they adore in the theatre, some in the museum, some in libraries of learning, some in picture galleries, some in oratorios and dancing saloons. The Sabbath is a weariness to them, and the worship of the true God an idle ceremony, the Scriptures a clasped book, and prayer, if used at all, used as a form of words.

I wish to heaven I could tell a better tale—I wish it consisted with duty to draw the veil over such an offensive and degrading statement; I know how I make myself obnoxious to the charge of sourness and incivility, and how all the affections which every intellectual mind hath towards these high objects of human understanding, will take alarm and turn against me, as if I undervalued those trophies which the power of mind hath won from the realms of ignorance or barbarism. But, in my own defence, I protest that I blame not these studies, which, on the contrary, I do highly admire, as the redeeming occupation of human nature; but I expose their tendency, and by instances justify that exposure of their

tendency to entrap the mind into an idolatry unworthy of itself, and to abstract it from the only true object of worship and source of contentment and happiness. And this I do not out of a cruel anatomy of great men's failings, (far be that vulgar passion from this dignified place!) but out of sympathy for their unbefriended condition, and inevitable destruction from the presence of the Lord and the enjoyment of His blessedness. My friends, my brethren, my fellow-men, and men of highest promise and mightiest power in the intellectual world, I see mocked by the evil spirit, by him domineered over, starved of spiritual food, dead to spiritual life, their souls altogether lost and perished from the way—these, by the grace of God, I would do my endeavour to reclaim, and teach how they may become spiritual men, and heirs of the promised inheritance, without in the least abasing their intellectual part.

If there was any hindrance in the word of God to the research of truth—any bounds prescribed to the play of imagination—any limit set to the cultivation of art or science—any impediment to the full development of human reason or intellect, then I would give men credit for placing in opposition the intellectual and spiritual man. But when we are commanded to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good—when we are addressed as wise men, and commanded to judge what is said—when of poetry in every kind we have the noblest specimens in the Holy Scriptures, and of wisdom the highest revelation—when we have all the arts called into requisition to build the temple of God, and the picture of the new Jerusalem described with all the accuracy of science—when we have God himself by His Holy Spirit accompanying the first preachers of our faith with the gifts of all learning, and all wisdom, and all knowledge, and all power, which the world in that age did need or could entertain, who is he that will say he must abuse his reason, and undervalue his intellect, cramp and confine his natural faculties, seek no eminence and court no distinction, if he once enter himself to the obedience of the spiritual life? Nay but, O man! who art thou that liest against God? Hath not God written that to whom much is given of him much shall be required—that he

who hath ten talents will be judged according to the improvement he hath made of his talents, and that we are stewards to be called to give an account of our stewardship? The genius of the gospel, therefore, instead of being adverse to the culture of every rational gift, doth overlay them with a strong objection, and will not suffer them to be dormant without the most terrible risk. It is not, therefore, to the gospel that the calamity is to be traced, but alas! it is to that fatal oblivion of God, and obscuration of His image within us and glory without us, which sat down at the fatal and calamitous fall. It is not by a process of reasoning that gifted men forsake the high and holy God; it is not because God's precepts bear against the improvement of the human mind that they reject them; it is not because spiritual life discourages intellectual life that intellectual life alone engrosseth them. Oh no! they have no such plea. It is the necessity of their nature which drives them, no less than that of sensual men,—the fatal necessity of fallen nature, to fall from the living and true God, deeper and deeper into the dominion of evil. Shall we, then, be punished for a necessity? No; we shall not be punished for a necessity; but we shall be punished for refusing the remedy against that necessity. I state it broadly as a necessity, in order that men may dream no longer of recovering light in that darkness where they dwell, be it intellectual or be it sensual, but look to the fountain of light in the word of God, and seek help from the Spirit of God. We all obey our common impulse of nature to leave God—we all need to be taught by the word and Spirit of God—we have wandered every one into his own way, and we all need to return to the Bishop of our souls.

These intellectual men, while they yield to their several pursuits that idolatry of the heart of which I have advertised them, are as hopelessly holden in the bondage of the evil one, and ignorance of the Holy One, as if there were no Bible in the world, no priest to expound it, no Saviour to redeem and save. Their only hope is to abstract themselves from that idolatry, and give themselves to the worship of the true God with their whole heart and soul and strength and might. But whereas they are already in captive chains, enamoured, be-

witched of these high pursuits, it is idle for me, or any one, to say, "Be free, be delivered, be worshippers of the true God." It is idle also to fancy that God will say to any one, "Be free," and he becomes free. But God, who dealeth more tenderly with human nature than theologians would have him, hath given in His word forms of truth, images of Himself, expounded the glorious vestiges of His handiwork, and revealed the warm and living sentiments of His heart. He hath opened in His word a world of thought and understanding, upon every lineament whereof He hath written His own glorious and everlasting nature. To this, even to this, we are requested to direct the faculties of our mind, that they may understand the outward world, blank to the natural eye of all memorials of God, that they may interpret the course of providence, now a riddle, an unintelligible riddle to the natural reason of man, and that they may acquire insight into the new regions of grace and glory, through which God leadeth, in an ecstatic delight, the faculties of man. Here is the antidote to the disease of nature in the volume of this book. This is the light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. We will not come to the light—we love darkness rather than light, because our deeds are evil.

Now, if intellectual, sentimental, and poetical men, and men of policy and art, would be delivered from their present idolatrous and perishing state, they must follow the self-same course with the most ignorant and untutored peasant—bring their minds to this storehouse of revealed truth, and occupy them there in a teachable and humble disposition. Do I degrade them by bringing them to this common fountain? Degrade them! Are they degraded by seeing with the same light, speaking with the same voice, warming themselves with the same heat, feeding themselves off the same earth with the common people? Degrade them! Are not all God's creatures honoured with a word from God's truthful lips? Is Christ unworthy of a philosopher or poet's company, Christ the Son of God, to whom every knee in heaven doth bow and every tongue confess? Degrade them! Will a man be degraded by getting to heaven from this troublous earth, and

escaping hell, running from the devil's clutches into the embrace of all God's affections.

And yet I believe in my heart, nay, I know assuredly, from a thousand conversations I have held with most worthy and esteemed friends, that this submission to be taught of God in the same school in which ignorant and vulgar craftsmen are taught, is a good part of their objection, and hence they scout the idea of sending the Scriptures where the people are not civilised, as if civilisation and culture of mind were a better thing, and a thing that must go before spiritual teaching. Now in truth they are two things, altogether diverse. A nation neighbouring to us hath ever been esteemed so civilised and polished a nation as to set the fashions even to us ; yet it hath almost no spiritual animation stirring in its populous frame. They are things diverse, altogether diverse, and I give intellectual men to wit that they will never be enlightened in spiritual things otherwise than by the means of God's word and Spirit,—the one of which is already given, the other promised to every one who will humbly and earnestly seek His coming. Locke is a stupendous instance of this : he travelled much with philosophy, with political science, and personal morality, and a more successful inquirer into these provinces the world hath never held—one so truly great in the research and utterance of truth ; yet he himself confessed that he came to no knowledge of God or godliness till he betook himself to the study of His word, and there he cast the anchor of his whole soul, and dwelt the last ten years of his life, giving glory to God and testimony to Christ by a spiritual walk and conversation. So also did Newton do and testify, so also Pascal and Boyle. And four greater intellectual names the temple of Fame hath nowhere engraven upon its tablets. Did these men abase their intellects thereby ? No, they elevated them—they devoted them to God, to the study of their own soul, to its purification for heaven, and to its attainment of true happiness.

But this degradation which intellectual men conceive to arise from partaking at the same common fountain of truth, (although all truth is common, both in itself and in its approaches,

there being no royal nor noble road,) originates not only in low estimates of the thing which is learned, in which all men should rejoice equally, as the eyes of all rejoice when light revisits them in the morning, or sleep comes in the evening to revisit the wearied frame of nature ; but it derives strength from a prejudice and error as to the occupation which they shall then have for the faculties of their understanding. There they differ from the common, unlettered, unintellectual soul. Their spiritual life will be extended into new regions by their intellectual avocations. Even over their own soul it will have a more sovereign sway ; it will reach into that cantonment of mind whither their faculties bend, in the starry heavens, in the regions of natural science, in the government of states, and in the universal development of truth. In so far as they use their intellect as a calling to live by, it will sustain their industry by the assurance of God's providence, and the rest that remaineth from labour at length ; in as far as they use it for the gratification of their native propensities, it will encourage them by adding to nature's promptings the authoritative voice of God to occupy till He come, and His great reward to those who have occupied well ; in as far as they follow it as a diversion or recreation, it will teach them to enjoy the more, as being a proof of their Creator's love and tenderest affection. In short, in every way spiritual life will stimulate intellectual life, and intellectual life stimulate spiritual life in its turn.

Therefore, ye men of wit and understanding whom I address, be persuaded, by that very dignity which ye have achieved over sensual and brutal men, to climb a higher eminence of being. Ye have travelled with natural thought and natural knowledge, interpreting the works of mighty and honourable minds, and rifling the honey from those combs in which it descendeth from age to age, stored and preserved. And ye have done well. Now do better ; converse with the Divinity who createth the intelligent mind—createth those who bred that milk and honey of the soul wherein ye have delight. He hath builded a temple for knowledge in the Holy Scriptures, a temple of divine knowledge and divine action. Exercise your faculties therein ; listen to the voice of your God,

and seek His righteous Spirit,—then there shall be created within you a life of immortality, and your powers of intellect shall brighten into new effulgence, and shine like the stars of the firmament for ever and ever.

I could almost wish that the formality, the sacred form of this place were broken up, and that I could have opportunities of conversing in free discourse with colleges and academies, and societies of intellectual and scientific men, in full deliberation assembled, as Paul had in the Areopagus and Forum of Athens—that is, if I were accomplished with human science and divine grace, as that greatest of Christians was accomplished. For whether it be severity of nature that misleads me, or zeal for Christ that carries me beyond reasonable bounds, I do declare it seems to my judgment that the lettered and scientific men are as careless about our religion—perhaps not much more knowing in it—as those ancient Greek senators and philosophers of the Stoic and Epicurean sect with whom the great herald of the gospel contended. And to the shame of Christian men and Christian churches, there are few to ring the summons into tasteful and reasoning minds, who hold the reins of discourse in private, clean exiling religious converse, and for public discoursing affect mightily to despise it. But, by the holy gospel and the terrible judgment, this ought no longer to be lamented over, but struggled with, otherwise they will perish to a man, and draw down to hell at their heels ignorant gaping throngs, who are wonder-struck with their high-sounding words and lofty pretensions. Therefore, may the Lord bless the aim of this discourse, overlook its weakness, or with its weakness work mighty effects, and stir up others to wage the warfare strenuously with all men, lettered or unlettered, that make head against Him!

## IX.

### ON INTELLECTUAL LIFE.

**I**LAMENT over the fate of sensual men who remove farther and farther from the living God, according as He showers His bounties of providence more luxuriantly into their dissolute lap, and who cannot by any providence but a severe, afflictive, and dismantling one be brought to think of God at all. But I might lament over the fate of intellectual men still more, who having grown up ignorant of God, and wedded their various faculties of reason, fancy, and taste to certain forms of intellectual truth, are perhaps still further removed from the chance of recovery. For sensual and indulgent men have always the day of adversity and sorrow before them as a day of hope, when, being robbed of that which they adored, they will be in want of an object to worship, and if duly applied to may haply accept of God, and be saved from the wrath to come. But men of genius and intellect, who are absorbed in the love and idolatry of their various ideal occupations, are not so liable to be stripped of the object of their idolatry. The mind and the world in which the mind occupies itself, are not obnoxious to such change as are the senses and the world in which they feast. The mind is its own place; its flowers and fruits no change of seasons changeth, no thief filches its treasures away, no tyrant lays hand on them, no lottery of life turns them in its fickle wheel; nothing but derangement of the faculties, or the dotage of age, can snatch away the feast of reason, or dismantle the temple and treasury of knowledge. So that what interest is embarked in matters of understanding is not liable to the reverses of outward things; and from what idolatry is rendered them, it will run harder with us to escape than even from

sensual idolatry. Our only chance is to meet with a mind of a higher order than our own which hath devoted itself to the true God, and can teach us by example to do so, and conquer our reluctance by intellectual weapons. Therefore it is so necessary that the preachers of religion should be strong in intellect as well as spirit, that they may constrain the wisdom and understanding and knowledge of the times to their proper occupation of glorifying the living God.

Now, whereas this duty is not often performed, we are very happy that in the regular order of discoursing upon various kinds of natural life, as distinguished from the spiritual life which is born of God, it hath fallen to our lot to fulfil it the best way we can; and we shall linger upon the topic another day for the sake of the many in this congregation who occupy themselves less or more with intellectual pursuits, upon which it is not our intention to cast reproach, but faithfully, as God enables us, to give you guidance in this honourable path, that you may pursue it without risk to your immortal souls.

You will always keep in mind this fundamental truth, that the knowledge of the true God is not natural to the mind, and will not come to light of its own accord, like the knowledge of our bodies and our minds, and of the outward objects which surround us. A man becomes a physician naturally by observing the diseases of the body, and the way in which it is acted upon by food and exercise, and heat and cold. A man becomes a historian by carefully remembering what has passed in his own day, and collecting what passed before him. A man becomes a cultivator of the soil, by noting the habits of plants, and the manner of their propagation; and so of every other profession and occupation upon the face of the earth. Nature is apt to them, and nothing is needed but to bring the mind to bear upon the outward world. Now nature is not apt to the knowledge of the true God. This does not grow by instinct, and has never been found making way for itself upon the earth, like the various sciences and arts of life. There are varieties of natural gifts and capacities: one man is born with acute and penetrating understanding which will divide knowledge and ideas asunder, as you divide tangible things; another will build ideas up into noble systems of

philosophic truth; a third into forms of lofty poetry; and a fourth gather them into collections, grow greedy of this merchandise, and store them up in histories; but it never happens by any chance that a man's natural genius is so fashioned as to invent or make discoveries in theology. Amongst all the varieties of the human faculties, there is not one for scanning the heaven of heavens, and fetching thence the attributes and properties of God. There is nothing hid but this: this hath always been hid; whereas everything else hath always been discoverable. In the poems of old Homer are set forth the varieties of affectionate attachment, the varieties of manly and feminine virtue, the fears, the hopes, the energies, the passions and affections of the mind; also the stratagems of war, and the arts of peace, and the resources of wisdom; the noble state and aspect of kingly power, the natural acts of heroism, and generosity, and devotion in every kind,—these are set forth in the most ancient poem of the earth, as well and variously as in any one man's writings since. But what is his theology? Fables, folly, absurdity; vice, villany, and enormity; guile, frolic, and obscenity. His men are men indeed; his gods chimeras of the brain, seldom greater, generally less, than men.

Take heed, therefore, that the mind which with liberty pervadeth space and time and the material universe, and penetrateth by a thousand sympathies into sister minds, cannot in its own strength attain unto the knowledge of the true God, and still less find out the proper method of worshipping and serving Him. There are three delusions that men are under touching the alteration of their nature. The first, that we are governed by necessity, and can do nothing to change ourselves; the second, that we can change at will; the third, that we are the creatures of circumstances. I would divide the truth amongst all these three opinions, which, as they are commonly held apart, are every one of them a gross and a fatal error. We are governed by necessity, in as far as our conduct does not go at random, but is determined by certain principles common to human nature, of which the chief one is the desire to improve our condition, and reach the place that we judge it best to occupy; but this condition into which we

would bring ourselves dependeth upon our knowledge of the various conditions which man hath been in, or can be in; and the ability of reaching that condition which we think the fittest depends upon the circumstances of our present condition, which is like the platform from which we have to arise. So that these three things concur—certain instincts leading us to remove inconveniences and attain well-being, knowledge how to do it, and instruments to do it withal. The instincts are unchangeable and necessary to human nature, the knowledge is changeable, and the instruments are infinitely various. It is vain, therefore, in the necessarians to say, that we must go on implicitly, and can make no help for ourselves. If we had no senses to perceive things, no mind to understand things, or no wells of mind, which are books, to drink out of,—that is, if we were stocks and stones,—then we were necessary in that sense. But this idea of necessity is only the philosophic, the abstract philosopher's error, and I never heard of any one who fell into the practice of it except old Pyrrho the Greek, who went forth as the bird flies, and lost his life over a precipice. The common error arises from the second dogma, of free will, or the ability to change when we please. You may as well think to wash the negro white, or to bend the rooted oak and make it change its gnarled knotted growth into the flexible scion which grows around its root, as think to change yourselves at will. For your conduct is determined by your schemes and plans; your schemes and plans by your wishes and ambitions; your wishes and ambitions by your knowledge and your opportunities. Without making alteration upon these parts of your inward man, and upon your outward circumstances, you will never change, but grow more and more inflexible till death. But if you set about increasing your knowledge, changing your company, altering your sensual indulgences, meditating upon your plans, lending your ear to counsel, and occupying your heart with wisdom, and so make innovation upon the republic within the breast, and alteration of the outward circumstances that set it into motion; then through the change of knowledge and vision which are to the mind like food and air to the body, you shall work upon the inward structure of the mind itself, and upon the outward life. There is an in-

ward structure and anatomy of the mind, as there is an inward structure and anatomy of the body. This is the necessary and unalterable part. As the eye must necessarily see, and the ear must necessarily hear, one part of the mind must necessarily hope, and another necessarily fear. Then there is a food proper to affect in every way, wholesome and unwholesome, the inward organs of mind, as there is a food capable of affecting in every way, wholesome and unwholesome, the inward organs of the body ; which food of the mind, as hath been said, is the various kinds of knowledge, objects of sense and opportunities of action. Now, just as the body, when its inward parts are wholesomely acted upon by wholesome food, puts on healthy appearances and healthy actions ; so the mind having its proper food brings forth outwardly good fruits of virtue and honesty and piety. And as when the body looks sickly and feels feeble, you alter its diet or place of abode in order to effect a change, but never think of a change from mere willing and wishing ; so with the mind when it puts forth bad fruits of immorality and folly, and hath no aspirations after the noble and the good. If you wish to change, it is in vain to think of doing so by a mere act of willing and wishing,—you must change upon it its food, give it new ideas, new views of things, new principles of action, new wishes, new ambitions, new objects of hope and fear, of love and joy. Therefore, while men entertain the same opinions, and submit their minds and bodies to the same routine of excitement, the same pleasures, the same company, the same habits of life, the same books, and the same topics of discourse,—so far from expecting change, they need only expect confirmation of the present character. The longer they follow in the train the deeper will they get involved. They are under a necessity of their own bringing on, and every man as he grows older feels the necessity growing in him. The hope of alteration decreases with age, and the whole texture of the character becomes rigid and inflexible.

Now take these two facts into account,—first the inability of the mind to strike out from its own natural darkness any light upon true religion, and the necessity, in order to change its condition and conduct, of new knowledge and materials of

action,—and you will perceive at once how intellectual people, as they grow in natural science, and improve in intellectual culture, do grow darker and darker upon religion, and remove farther and farther from the beginnings of spiritual life. All other knowledge but revealed knowledge becomes an attraction towards some other thing than God,—the more knowledge the more attractions, the more attractions the more bondage, and the less liberty to make that renouncement of self-esteem and worldly preferences which spiritual life requires. I shall now illustrate this doctrine by one or two examples of the progress of intellectual alienation from God.

The young disciple of the healing art becomes occupied with the material part of man, he anatomises the dead subject, he interrogates the body of the living, he studies the healthy and the diseased forms; then he enters upon practice,—it grows upon him, and as it grows upon him he gives his mind, his time, his thought to it, until he forgets that such a thing as spirit exists. Every alteration of mind he refers to a physical cause, and seeks for it a physical remedy. All his anxiety as to men is on this side the grave. When their breath is fled his care is ceased, and with his care all his anxiety is likewise ceased. So that immortality and immateriality are swallowed up in matter and mortality. And it comes to pass that by what process his character as a philosophical or a practical physician is strengthened, by that selfsame process his forgetfulness of the soul, of futurity, of God, are strengthened, until in the end he scoffs at all things unseen and sacred, and finds no need of salvation, and no time for listening to the message of salvation. Would that man recover his lost spiritual faculties, he must work by the same way by which he gained his scientific faculties. He must anatomise the soul, and observe its derangements and diseases; he must examine the pathology and physiology of the spirit of man, know the cures which have been effected by the gospel of Christ, try its remedies upon himself, and so build up the spiritual part of his nature by the same painstaking diligence with which he built up the intellectual.

The young disciple of law, upon the same principle, but after a somewhat different manner, is cheated of his spiritual

part, and becomes both sceptical in his opinions and irreligious in his practice by the same stealthy encroachment of intellectual and worldly occupation. He gives himself to the study of justice, of civil polity, of legal right or wrong. The laws of man are the test of that morality or immorality which his mind is occupied about; the eye and witness of man brings things to light, and the judgment of man is its acquittal or condemnation. If now, while the youth is engrossed with all his faculties upon this field into which his calling brings him, he were to view things a little deeper, and consider these visible outbreaks of conduct as the bursting forth of iniquity in the heart; then if he would seek for the institution of law and government by which these inward movements of the soul are to be watched, remarked, brought to judgment and corrected, he would come to see a necessity for the oversight of God and the gospel of Christ, and intellectual and spiritual knowledge would go on hand in hand. But if he look no deeper into the well-spring of iniquity, and content himself as they do with the study of the Pandects in civil law, and the Canons of ecclesiastical law, and the Digests of common law so far as it hath been digested, never consulting the Institutes of spiritual or conscientious law as it is written in the Scriptures, then it must come to pass that all the faculties of his mind will be engrossed with visible offences, all his speculations with social reformations, and the idol of his mind will be to perfect social and legal institutions. The finer discernment of conscience he will lose, the responsibility to God forget, the inward purity of his mind disregard, and, so that he can keep all outwardly straight and pure, he will defy the world to say him or do him wrong. To recover this man, who hath wandered also into the way of his own profession, what method is there under heaven but that he should learn from God, afresh and from the beginning, the first institutes of human sinfulness, of divine omniscience and holiness, of eternal judgment, of repentance unto life, of sanctification, and of salvation from the wrath to come?

Again, the youth who gives himself to the culture of his imagination, doth exhaust the high faculties of his soul upon the objects he fancies. Is it nature? then he plants

a savage genius in every rough and rugged scene, and every stream is haunted with nymphs of fairest form,—the woods are peopled with sylvan deities, there is a spirit in the storm, and the elements of nature are given into the hands of terrible agents,—and thus all that should have raised the thoughts to the supreme God, raises them no higher than to a polytheism or system of gods of his own imagining, to whom every object of nature and faculty of thought being devote, what is there left within or without him for discerning or honouring the invisible Creator of all things? Is it love that is his theme? then he doth exalt his mistress into his god, he devotes his soul to her, his life, his all; he lives in the light of her countenance, heaven is in her eye, her touch is ravishment; life, death, and eternity are cheap in order to be able to call her his own. Such is the unhappy case of all the rhymesters of love from the days of Petrarca, their great master, or from the days of old Anacreon the Greek, down to the present times; their affections are on human forms, their communion and fellowship is with a fellow-creature,—they court nothing higher, they care for nothing higher. What affection have they to spare for Christ, what communion for the Spirit, what devotion to God, what ambition of heaven, what relish for immortality?

The medical class of intellectual men become generally materialists from constantly looking, thinking, and reflecting upon the material part of men. They cease to be religious or spiritual, not by process of thought, as they flatter themselves, but by their forgetfulness, and want of thought upon spirit or the phenomena of spirit. The legal class of intellectual men, amongst whom I include jurisconsults and statesmen, and all connected with the administration of the social state, do seldom become materialists: often they become atheists from not reflecting upon the superintendence of God, but giving all human conduct and misconduct, all success and failure, all prosperity and adversity, into the hands of good or bad government; or they become Unitarians, that is, they discover not the fallen and sinful state of man, nor the redemption of Christ, rejecting atonement and eternal judgment. They discover no use for these mystical doctrines, because they never see the mystery

of iniquity within the breast, from looking no farther than the recorded leaves of human jurisprudence and legislation. The poets, again, are either a god unto themselves, from always spinning their own ideas into measured verse, or they make a god of the world which they contemplate, or of the hero they celebrate, or of the mistress they adore, or of the muse whose banner they sing under, or some other vague unsettled imagination. They cannot be accused of atheism, for they make gods in every place; and for divine rule they know it not, being generally a law unto their own ungovernable selves.

If I spoke beyond the truth I should flinch from what I have said, but being within the mark I go on without apology to argue, that whosoever is embarked in these or other intellectual courses is in a labyrinth from which no caution nor knowledge of his own can deliver him. He will not prosper by following on his path, he will not prosper by striking into any new path of intellect, he must stop, cry for help like a lost man, and seek help where help and deliverance are found. His natural thoughts are a maze in which he will wander from God, for ever lost, as they wandered in the days of old. If he wish on any account a reformation of his life, an escape from sin to righteousness, a return from darkness into light, from nature unto God, he must address himself to the word and counsels of God, which will give a new colour to everything which he hath hitherto beheld, and a new feeling to everything which his mind hath hitherto handled. Worldly distinctions, honourable places, fame present or posthumous, will come to lose their mighty power, when eternity, with its distinctions, places, and renown, cometh in unmeasured magnitude and duration to figure before the mind. Present enjoyments of a sensual kind to which knowledge and skill exalt those who are not born to them, such as villas, pleasure grounds, luxurious accommodations of the person, treats to the eye of painted pictures, and to the ear of melodious sounds,—things which properly belong to sensual life, and which intellectual lives aforetime despised, but now coveteth after hardly less than sensual lives,—these enjoyments and recreations of this mortal state, will fall into comparative insignificance, be handled, possessed, and resigned with indifference of soul,

stirring emulation and energy no more, when we receive information of the abodes prepared for the righteous on high, verdant as the flowery mead, refreshing as the rivers of waters, brilliant as Eastern gems, and joyful as the unknown delights of Eden. Everything that moves the mind of man to good becomes altered by the knowledge which is to be derived from the word of God: new knowledge of God fosters new feelings towards Him, new knowledge of our fallen state begets new inspection of ourselves, the knowledge of redemption begets new hopes, the discipline of Christ directs to new ways, the liberty of prayer and the promise of the Spirit inspire hope, expectation, and assurance. Heaven holds out inducement; hell also. Death and its consequences bring on thoughtfulness; the whole man is changed by the new revelations of truth, which act upon him as the changing wind acts upon the vessel which it impelleth. But if a man will refuse to come and go between human life and the word of God,—if he will not travel with supernatural wisdom,—if he will plod on in the ways of mere human knowledge as he hath hitherto plodded, then what end shall he reach but the end which all men before him have reached,—of continuing in his present courses, of confirming them, till death abstract him from things seen and temporal unto things unseen and eternal?

Then, indeed, things shall change with the speed and terror of the thunderbolt; the spirit shall unsheathe itself naked from its vile scabbard, as the lightning flasheth effulgent from the riven cloud, and with the lightning's wing it shall escape away to a place beyond the ken of man. You can point where it was, you can point the putrid mass it hath left a prey to corruption, but whither it hath fared you cannot conjecture. Certes it hath left the world behind it, and the speculations of the world. The law courts and law rolls, the schools of philosophy and academies of knowledge where intellect had its home, the academic groves in which they wandered, and the topics of learning whereon they discoursed, are still here. All it joined its being to is left behind; and unless the place it hath gone to be a place thus constituted with the same calls for research and difficult inquiry, his soul that carried off such a deal of knowledge connected with the earth, must be sadly

out of place, and miserably useless, like those sleepers whom they fable after a long age of sleep to have been awakened unto life again, and found themselves supremely miserable. But woe is unto them ! What use is there for knowledge anywhere but in this fallen abode ? Knowledge of good and ill is the very badge of our fallen condition, before which all was the placid play of sweetly-attuned instinct. To instinct it must return. The knowledge is a mere adjunct of our present estate and present mysterious world. The instinct they came into, of forgetting God, of denying God, of hating God, will make devils of them. The appetite they had for wickedness will devour them ; they will have a place where these instincts of evil will come into eager play, and work supreme misery ; and so it endeth with all who forget God, and refuse to know Him, to whatever other knowledge they may promote themselves.

## X.

### ON MORAL LIFE.

**I**NTELLECTUAL life, of which we have lately discoursed, is conversant with thoughts; but moral life, on which we are now to discourse, is conversant with worthy actions: and by how much it is nobler in a man to express his mind by worthy actions than by changeable words, to be the thing he admires than merely to admire, by so much is the present topic of discourse more dignified than the former. Intellectual life, moreover, doth embrace all the occupations of the mind, foolish as well as wise, hurtful as well as profitable, selfish as well as generous; but moral life is select and pure, embracing only the most chaste and virtuous and refined strain of conduct; it exerciseth self-government, holding sensual life in restraint; it seeketh in social life whatever things are pure, just, honourable, and of good report, and is altogether worthy to be treated by spiritual life as a younger sister. For the Father of spiritual life is the Father of moral life also, and wrote with His own fingers its ten fundamental statutes, and presented them with stately and pompous ceremonial as His first testament unto the world. And when the second testament began to be unfolded by our great spiritual Head, He ratified and confirmed the old, in proof of which, in His first sermon to the people, He expanded its spirit over the inmost feelings of the mind, and practised to the very letter the whole compass of its requirements. He adopted the moral law into His spiritual code, He prized it, He made it fundamental, and said, "Unless ye keep the commandments ye cannot become my disciples."

The theme of moral life, therefore, upon which we enter to discourse with much diffidence and with prayer for wisdom

from above, is to be treated with a devout and tender regard by the advocate of spiritual life, which opposeth it not, but sustaineth it amidst the trials of this lustful and luxurious world. For if the soul of man did possess still, as it possessed before the fall, the faculty of discerning at all times, and with the promptness of instinct, the light which guideth unto the high and honourable paths of virtue, and perseverance to endure the severe exercises of self-denial and mortification which virtuous paths and virtuous regions impose, then there would have been no need of a revelation from on high, which is not meant to set aside our natural faculties, either of perceiving truth or of suffering for the sake of truth, but to foster them with the embrace of divine favour and instruction and reward. It is the infirmity of our minds within and the adverseness of the world without, stifling moral life in most and threatening it in all, which made the Lord our God take it under His special patronage, that it might not altogether perish from the earth. So that it is nothing but the wily policy of the great deceiver which hath set on strife these helpmeets for one another,—made the moral man look upon the spiritual man as a cunning deceiver, and made the spiritual man look back upon the moral man as an enemy who needeth to be withstood. This, I say, is an artifice of Satan, to set chief friends asunder, and profit by their strife. For the moral man is not our enemy, and the spiritual man is not a cunning deceiver; but the moral man hath not yet recognised his own weakness, and the imperfection of his own performances, and the necessity of salvation through the cross of Christ, and of new obedience through the operation of the Spirit of God. But though they agree not wholly, they should rejoice together that they have escaped the love of sensual life, that gulf of noble natures which suffocates and buries the soul, nor ever suffers it to feel any longings after immortality, and that they have found among the ruins of their breast that discernment of right and wrong which is the noblest distinction of the human soul. They should likewise rejoice together that their intellect is not moored to sense, but to virtue, and endeavoureth to disentangle the evil and the good which lie in such confused mixture upon the earth.

They are one thus far, and if they are not one throughout, it is, as hath been said, because the moral man seeth but faintly his relationship to God, and hath need to be enlightened by His word and Spirit; which office let the spiritual man kindly and patiently fulfil. Of human nature the spiritual man hath passed through one transformation which the moral man, through ignorance of its nature and necessity, hath not undergone; and it becometh him who knows patiently to wait upon him who knoweth not, until the Lord shall be pleased to accomplish upon him the same change in which he rejoiceth.

Such I understand to be the nature of my credentials, as a commissioned advocate of spiritual life towards the servants of good morals, private benevolence, and public order, before whom I have undertaken to set forth in order the imperfection of that with which they rest satisfied. These credentials I have thought it the more necessary to state at the beginning, because the preachers of spiritual life and evangelical obedience lie under misrepresentation and odium as if they were sour and unkind upon every other form of merit except their own. Without further delay I enter to the work of opening up, wherever I can discern them, the natural weakness and imperfections of moral life, and the strength and sustenance which it would derive on all sides from the resources of the spiritual man. The eye with which it seeks its way is neither clear nor correct, and in this discourse I shall content myself with shewing that it but needeth to be corrected by the Spirit of God, and purged at the fountain of divine truth. In pressing this first disability of moral life, its defective vision of the light, I will not take advantage of the arguments which in ancient times the Epicureans urged against the existence of an inward perception of right and wrong, denying the testimony of conscience, and counting that the most virtuous which is the most profitable and pleasant upon the whole; nor will I take advantage of the arguments with which the great ecclesiastical philosopher of the last age maintained the same doctrine of the blindness of the mind within, and regarded their usefulness as the only clue to virtuous actions; nor of the arguments of the

great jurisconsult of this age in the same behalf, because I do not believe them to be founded on truth, but to spring from narrow views of human nature, and peculiar conditions of human society. I believe that there is an eye within the mind to discern the right and wrong, both of feelings and conduct, as there is an eye in the intellect to discern the truth and falsehood of opinions; because when any moral subject is handled before the mind of any assembly, they go along approving or disapproving, as unanimously and instinctively, and far more so than when an intellectual subject is displayed before their judgments. Feelings of the right and wrong of conduct are far more uniform in a multitude of men than feelings of the right and wrong of opinions; yet no man disputeth that the mind hath the faculty of finding out truth, because men disagree upon particular truths. No more should they dispute that the mind hath the faculty of discerning right because men differ upon particular actions. They may as truly say that I think and imagine and judge for the sake of advantage and pleasure, as say that I blame and approve and feel for the sake of advantage and pleasure. For the one is as instantaneous an operation of the mind as is the other, and the one taketh place as free from calculation as doth the other. When a man begins to take second thoughts and calculate, holding his first impressions at abeyance until he hath taken the scope of consequences and the measure of advantage, it is then that his deliverance is to be doubted, both as to opinions of truth and as to feelings of conduct. And if, in order to feel and act well, we had first to estimate the consequences primary and secondary, proximate and remote, as that deep and penetrating jurisconsult hath well required, we would need to be as penetrating into futurity as a prophet, as wise in moral calculation as the most skilful arithmetician is in numbers, and as accurate in weighing good and ill against each other, and striking the balance, as if good and ill were tangible and material things. This doctrine of utility, which, in Greece as in England, was the offspring of an indulgent age, is not the philosophy of morals, though it is the true philosophy of laws and polity, which being instituted for

securing the common advantage, should steer by the principle of utility alone. This is the true principle of the jurisconsult and the legislator, and to this he should be forced to confine himself. Morals are a nicer thing, and otherwise provided for. The inward sentiments of right and wrong God did not leave to any lawgiver to school the people into. Their presence already in the breast of the people is that which maketh the office of the lawgiver and the jurisconsult, who are no more than servants of the great consciousness of right and reverence of right which prevaleth mightily in every community of men.

But while I do thus argue that there is an eye within the soul which scanneth and meteth out the proprieties of conduct, I argue that many things do stand in the way of its seeing clearly and correctly, and that the best moralist who ever lived hath no instruments for clearing these obstacles away. Of these obstacles which pervert and darken moral judgments, I place first fleshly lusts, which tend directly to put light out of the soul, and to suffocate its very life. The enjoyments of the flesh, which are foods and drinks, and sights and soft luxuries, as they gain upon us do bring into subjection the anxieties of the mind, and engross its wishes, hopes, and fears, and these affections are no longer at liberty to join themselves to true nobleness and virtue, and they gradually debauch the intellect also to their service. The wants of the present day multiply, the gratification of the present appetite becomes more imperative, schemes for keeping up the expensive work of enjoyment occupy us wholly. The intellect being debauched and led astray, then farewell to noble thoughts and virtuous deeds. Venality, policy, gain at any expense, become the order of the day. The advancement of truth, the propagation of virtue, suffering for principle's sake, the very names of principle, and virtue, and patriotism become hooted, and an age of selfishness and ridicule setteth in. Therefore fleshly lusts must be cast off before the soul which hath got so entangled can become free to feel its own consciousness of truth, or to follow that consciousness which is felt. Now I ask the moralist for his instruments to remove this hindrance of moral vision. He

hath not any, except to discourse upon the beauty of virtue and the hatefulness of vice, which to a sensual man is like reasoning with a man intoxicated, or arguing with a man in love. He disputes your authority, he comes not to your lessons, he orders you to attend to your own affairs. Another impediment in the way of the mind's seeing distinctly is the sinister and equivocal course which causes the soul, like a broken mirror, to cast back no distinct images of truth. Those policies and pretences which are glossed over with the names of prudence and politeness—whereas prudence is the proper way of bringing truth to light, and politeness the best way of making it acceptable—are so interwoven with the fabric of society, and so necessary, they say, to the success of life, that until a man comes to recognise the God of heaven as the chief part of his society, and eternity as the great prize in life, there is no disentangling him from these obliquities of intention which hinder him from discerning his way distinctly. And how shall ever morals do the office of disentangling men from obliquities allowed and patronised by society into the knowledge of the eye of God and the rewards of eternity? Moralists knew nothing about God and a future state until they filched it unacknowledged from revelation. And the powers of the world to come, to rectify the ways of man, they cannot use without availing themselves of our spiritual weapons, and acknowledging that infirmity which we urge upon their notice.

There are many other impediments to the clear perception of right and wrong which it would occupy a treatise to unfold,—such as the prejudices of the understanding, which bring on prejudices of the affections and passions, and make the soul a counterfeit to itself; idolatries of outward things, which carry it forth from the observation of its own self to become the tool and instrument of another's will, or the idolater of some of nature's beautiful forms; there is also idolatry of herself, which intoxicates her with vanity, and exhibits her to herself in fantastical guises. These and many other things which might be mentioned bring veils and distortion upon the eye of the mind, hindering it to discern its way clearly,

however much it might be disposed to follow it. Now I come to the question, and ask the moralist by what means these impediments are to be removed from the eyes of men. I allow to him that there is a power in man to recognise the honourable, the noble, the praiseworthy, and the good, and to approve it when it is set forth in his hearing, and that had he the means of casting off the disguises of corrupt and ignorant nature, which have as it were muffled and deadened her inward perceptions, he would come to taste the good and ill of all feelings and actions, as the palate of the mouth tasteth the bitter and the sweet of all corporeal things. It is in a man as fire is in the flint and lightning in the lowering clouds, but there wanteth means to extricate it from its confinement. And I ask the moralist for those means. The ancient philosophers sought them in temperance and self-denial, retirement, in profound meditation, and separation from honour, pleasure, and preferment. But though this were a successful regimen, it is manifestly inapplicable to all but a few. The world is toiling for bread, and resting its weary limbs for the renewal of toil; we are trained in the bosom of tempting vicious scenes, ignorant of the art of interrogating ourselves, without time to listen to philosophical arguments upon points of duty, the children of customs and prejudices caught in youth and over which we ourselves had no control. It is impossible, therefore, the people can go into the training of ancient sages. I ask again, therefore, how the minds of the people are to be delivered from the blinds of nature and the world, into the clear perception of the path of moral duty, and into the noble power of self-direction. For it is most pitiable to regard their state. They hold no consultation with their souls upon the way of regulating their life; but consult first their appetites, which they indulge within the scope of their fortune and the permission of the laws; then they consult the customs of their rank, going with them as far as they can consistently with their means; then they consult their interest—that is, the means of gratification; some few consult their taste and humour and natural temper; how few, alas! peruse the leaves of their conscious spirit to ascertain the right and wrong of the thousand feelings and words and actions they indulge in

during the busy day. I do not say but they may preserve a good deal of the outward forms of virtue. For the laws and customs by which they regulate their conduct must keep close by virtue, in order to procure the happiness of society; and one who consults self-interest upon a large scale must play into the hand of good moral behaviour. But will any man tell me that this is virtue, merely by fear of the punishment of law, the censure of our friends, or the loss of fortune, to be kept and constrained to virtuous courses? Then the slave, who from fear of the lash trespasseth not his master's orders, is a virtuous man; and the penurious miser, who not to lose his gain deals honestly, is a virtuous man; and the upstart youth, who to gain currency in fashionable life dashes into all its extravagances, is a virtuous man; and the inferior, who fawns upon a superior to procure his countenance, is a virtuous man; and the superior who coerces an inferior, to make a vicious tool of him, is a virtuous man; and the worst of men are virtuous, for they are all fearing law, obeying customs, and consulting for their interest. There is no virtue in deferring to customs of any kind,—the virtue lies in proving the customs before the bar of our own conscience, and deferring to them, or departing from them, according to the verdict. There is no virtue in being forced for advantage sake into honest measures,—the virtue lies in taking the measures that are right, come what will out of them. Virtue is the deference to inward conviction, not to outward form, a homage to the voice of conscience and the heart, not to the voice of any outward thing.

This age hath become so political and calculating, our moralists being all grown into economists, that I almost feel an apology due for using this antiquated term, virtue. They have grown into such conceit of political managements and mismanagements, as to have lost sight of everything beside. Laws and political institutions are the great panacea of man's condition. Pity on such paltry bigotry! The mind of man wants regulation within itself,—something at home, constantly present and constantly speaking,—something according to which it may rightly live and move and have its being. Laws are well enough in their outward place; but they have

no bearing upon a man's inward parts, none upon his outward actions, until they affect another's interests. Laws do not make the man—they restrain the man. They define to each his locality of freedom, within which they are not privileged to enter. Within this circle the life of nine-tenths of the community is transacted, free from the contact of law, and those whose actions it doth touch, it toucheth but occasionally. Now I want regulation for those peaceable obedient children of the community who are the community's strength. But your economists are so busy with their small speculations of public wealth, as to give no ear to this. They look upon it as an inferior question, and hold the moralists and the evangelists who attend upon it, as singularly simple, primitive, and useless men. This is so ridiculous in the eye of reason and common sense. It is as if the planter of a forest, after lining off to each tree its proper space, to grow on unmolested, should forbid all care of the forester, and all attention to the necessities of the plants. Law and political economy define the place and province of each man; morals and religion take the care of his culture, and are never in their importance to be once demeaned to the others, which are as it were but the castigators of culprits—these the instructors of honest men.

To proceed, therefore, with our discourse,—of which we feel it needful, in this political city, to justify the supreme importance to that they make such noise about,—we confess we see not how moral life can be brought to prevail generally amongst men by those instruments which moralists possess of their own. They have nothing able to shake the empire of sense and ignorance and worldliness, under which the soul of man is obscured from his own perception, and God from the perception of his soul. Men are lost from all hope of regeneration, their spirits borne down with a physical necessity—the intellectual, the moral, the spiritual, extinguished to them for ever, unless the weapons which are mighty for the pulling down of strongholds be appealed to. The revelation of God is the hammer that breaketh the rock asunder—the two-edged sword that divideth even to the joints and the marrow—the discerners of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The

moralist must stand to a side defeated, and allow the evangelist to try where he has failed. And the evangelist may likewise fail, for there is a fatal power in human nature to resist even the instruments of God, who doth not aim to take us by storm, but by argument to persuade us. But before he yields, the evangelist can muster to the work a powerful host, of which the moralist could not bring one individual into the field.

For shaking the empire of sense, so firmly seated in the appetites and enjoyments of human nature, he can come thundering omnipotent vengeance in the astonished ear, and dividing eternal destiny in the fearful sight, and weaving of death, judgment, and eternity such discourses as may thrill the most besotted sensualist with apprehension of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come; men possessed with the Spirit which inspired Paul, may still preach before tyrannical and luxurious monarchs until they tremble upon their thrones; and when the spirit is up in arms against its carnal oppressor, the skilful divider of the word of truth will feed his valour with assurances of divine strength and energy, keep him in heart by the gospel of reconciliation, revealing heaven to his hopes, and blazoning mercy upon the standard of salvation, which is ever before his sight. Oh! when the gospel is well developed in the ear of any man, its sublime overtures of life and immortality, its terrible issues of death and damnation, its unspeakable affections, its elevated sentiments, its urgent motives, its hopes and joys and consolations, so take the hearer captive that he is entranced with its mighty melody, and persuaded for the time being to become a Christian. For under all the absorption of sense and pleasure, there is felt within the soul a blank which needeth to be supplied; a sense of nobler destiny which cruelly interfereth in all our gay, worldly, and ambitious pursuits, to which the gospel, when spoken skilfully, is a message of the greatest joy.

Again, to remove out of the way the curtains of duplicity and disguise, behind which so much of human life is dishonourably transacted, the evangelist hath the omniscient and all-pervading eye of God, the universal law of holiness, Christ's

intolerance of any other master, and His denunciations of a double eye and double service. Conscience is placed upon the alert, and enlightened by the whole counsel of God. He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all. Then to remove the blind of self-sufficiency, which is, after sensuality, the greatest obstacle to moral improvement, the evangelist hath in revelation the amplest means. While Paul regarded only the letter of the law of God, he lived contented with his outward righteousness ; but when it arose before him in its spiritual applications, his soul died within him, and his sense of sinfulness revived ; so likewise, men who look only to outward actions of religion and morality, live in a state of self-complacency, the most adverse to the sight of their present imperfection, and to the desire of further attainment. This frame of mind the revelation of God breaketh up at once, by exposing the native sinfulness of the heart, the impurity of every thought, and the sinful taint of every action. Contrition for sin succeedeth to Pharisaical pride and ignorant self-sufficiency, humility succeedeth to pride, an ear for instruction cometh instead of arrogance, the eye is directed from the things behind to the things that are still before, and we press on towards the prize of our high calling in Christ. This is the frame to be taught of God, and to learn of Christ, who is meek and lowly: our souls lying open to light, are enlightened by the word and Spirit of the living God.

But time fails us to shew how every other blind is taken off. The prejudices of the understanding, and of the affections, and of the passions, are all corrected by immediate instruction from on high. The regard we paid to outward things for their own sakes we now give to them for the sake of God their Creator, whom we behold in the mirror of His works and feel within our own souls, impelling them to righteousness and true holiness, which are His moral image.

These hindrances being removed by the mighty instruments of the word and Spirit of God from before the eye of our mind, it beginneth to discern its way distinctly, amidst the confused intermixture of good and ill in which the heart and the world abound. Now commenceth the warfare of the good and evil principle within the soul. The heart

finds itself no longer free to play its wanton pleasures ; the law of the mind maketh head against the law of the members. All the better powers of the inward man are awake and battling for their privileges, and a constitution of holiness is extricating itself from the anarchy of sin. Meanwhile, the portals of the mind and the messengers of its operations to the outward world are put under restraint, and no longer allowed in their former licence. Truth, and singleness of speech, and sincerity of look, and gravity of demeanour, bespeak a regulated and temperate spirit within, and the life assumes purpose and design, opportunities of well-doing are sought, uprightness and benevolence coveted after, intemperance and indifference to good laid aside, and an active intercourse established between the spirit conscious of good and the opportunities of good which the world affords.

Thus the spark of divine light within a man is brought alive, and fed with fuel from the word of God formerly disrelished, and from the outward world which formerly extinguished it. All hindrances, deceptions, and disguises are removed out of the way, and the soul displayeth itself truly. And whereas by the narrow occupations of human life few of man's feelings are called forth, and the higher faculties of the soul might slumber, the word of God doth, as it were by a muster-roll, call upon each by name, and appoint to it its proper occasion of appearing, on which occasion if the heaven-invoked feeling be off its post, then the soul discovereth her defective discipline and seeketh instruction ; and if the heaven-invoked feeling be on its post, then she discerneth her divine order, and rejoiceth in God her Redeemer. Thus she is brought into active speculation and watchfulness ; she hath invocations from heaven, she giveth glad responses, she dischargeth her duties, and glories in the resemblance of her God. The films and veils of her vision, the distorting medium of prejudice and ignorance, are all removed, a thousand eyes implanted, conscience alive, tender, and sensitive, the dominion of custom abolished, the consultation of present gratification and immediate interest foregone, the soul is its own guide, its own master once more. True morality commenceth, flowing fresh and full from moral feeling and conviction, the fountain of morals.

Every action is a high testimony to the liberty of the soul, and a memorial of her right under God to decide and act upon her own account. Thus is produced by spiritual means that irradiation of the soul and illumination of her path for which no means are provided by the moralist. The source of this spiritual light, as of the natural light, is from God. Christ is the Sun of this righteousness, who hath arisen with healing in His beams. The word of God is the book of books which manifesteth it. The Spirit of God is the great Teacher who instructeth our souls in it. Spiritual life is the divine fruit. All these things are beyond the natural sphere of the moralist, the lawgiver, and the statesman. They ought to found their several structures hereon ; they should call Christ their elder Brother ; they should serve Him and prosper His faithful servants in their several spheres, that the fruits of righteousness, which are peace and happiness and joy, may have their chosen habitation amongst us, and overshadow our nation with their divine protection.

## XI.

### ON MORAL LIFE.

**I**T is no pleasant office to dwell upon the imperfections and disabilities of human nature, unless with the view of interesting it in the strength and sustenance which is from above. For if there be no remedy for an ailment, it is better to let it depart into the oblivion to which nature for her own comfort endeavours to dismiss it ; and the man doth but sport with her pain and upbraid her defect, who, having no means nor intention of comfort or help, doth by language drag forth and disclose the trouble better hid, and by ill-timed eloquence or cold-hearted sarcasm doth make an endeavour to present it in vivid colours to the imagination and the heart. And the poor misused patient would well serve such an unfeeling counsellor by dismissing him from his presence, and commanding him to enter it no more. For this very reason, it is wise to exclude at once from our reading all such sentimental books as are content with portraying the infirmities of human nature, and the evil accidents of human life, unless they add thereto some good moral counsel, or some religious consolation to sustain the soul which they have been at pains to afflict. Otherwise they do but invade our privacy, they do enter into the inward chambers of our mind, they do afflict, they do scourge our unoffending feelings,—alas ! too much afflicted already ; they do leave them to fester in their blood, and the assassins escape away, rejoicing in the mischief they have wrought. Of such a kind I understand your books of German sentiment to be, taking their pattern from the “ Sorrows of Werter,” that work of a most sublime genius ; of such a kind I know the novels of one of our English writers on jurisprudence to be ; of such a kind certainly are the writings

of Rousseau and De Staël, with this wicked addition, that they present physical enjoyment and idle dalliance as the natural remedy of those sentimental wounds which they have excited in the soul.

But verily this task we have undertaken in the strength of Almighty God to perform is a task of another and a most noble kind. We do make a demonstration of nature's weakness only to add thereto a demonstration of nature's strength. We place moral infirmity into view, only that we may bring spiritual sustenance to its aid. We do not wilfully afflict, we do not murderously demolish and scornfully triumph over the fallen, but we kindly and gently point to the symptoms of disease and decline; we remind nature of the present pain and infirmity, and arouse her from lethargy and thoughtlessness, that she may take the alarm, and open her ear to counsel, which counsel we present, that she may have her refuge in the chief Physician, and be healed with the balm that is in Gilead for every wounded and afflicted soul. In this kind spirit of admonition first, and salvation after it, of which our Master, that came to bind up the broken-hearted, hath set us the example, we began to inquire into the whole structure and resources of moral life, that we might see whether there was any room or necessity still left in the mind and life of men for this spiritual life, of which so much is said before the world, and by which the world, for all that can be said, is so little impressed,—intending, if it appeared that moralists had in their hands instruments sufficient for preferring human nature to the height of her ambitions, and entrenching her secure in the fortress of her happiness, to stop short, and proceed no further in the way of opening up another style of life than that which had been already found sufficient for her wants and wishes. In doing which most fair and honourable office for moral life, we turned our attention first to the eye with which she looked around her into the moral world, and sought to discern the evil from the good. This implement of her vision, which is generally called the moral sense, we found to be defiled and bedimmed, and almost closed up and benighted with many excrescences and films brought on by the prejudice, the ignorance, and the vice

in which she hath been reared, and the vile, crooked tendencies which are inherent in her very nature. Then we besought the moralist for medicines and surgery, and asked him forthwith to turn out to her help, and develop his treatment in our hearing. We tried his tactics of legislation, of economics, of morals, but they were but a battering ram of idle words, or a set of barriers rudely planted around the hold, which none of them could enter and cleanse, and altogether purify of its vile possessors. Then, that remedy might not utterly fail, we called upon the evangelist to discover what he had in store for couching and purifying the organ of moral vision, that the mind might discern clearly her way in moral life. These we laid before you, as it becometh an advocate of spiritual life to do, and the method of their operation, and the nature of their cure, and the state of the mind which hath been so purified by the word and Spirit of God. All which inquiry we leave in the hands of a gracious God, for whose sake we act, and to the consideration of your souls, for which we labour as one that hath to give an account.

We come next in this anatomy of the soul's moral constitution, to examine the strength of her hand to work out that which she judgeth rightly. This is an inquiry of more importance than the last. For a man who hath lost his vision, or even though he should have been born blind, can by the instruction and guidance of another be made useful in his day and generation ; but a man who is impotent in his limbs and prostrate in his strength is a world's burden,—a miserable burden unto himself. The hand to do is more precious than the eye to see. For what availeth sight but to disclose the world in which we have to act our part ? It is not merely to gaze, to admire, to discourse over nature's distant charms, that the eye hath been given unto man. He longeth to reach, to handle, to embrace what his eye delighteth to dwell upon, to draw near to it, to make his home in the bosom of it, to make it and to call it his own. A good book, which is perhaps the choicest thing the eye peruseth, is nothing while it merely converseth with the eye: it enters thereby into the musing and meditative mind, where it breeds active thought within the brain, and after a season the brain longs to be delivered

of its burden ; then the hand, the energy of limb and action, cometh into play ; and, till the work is accomplished, it is all an abortion of the brain, a thing that hath been, but from whose being the world hath profited nothing.

Action and the hand to act are before vision and the eye to see ; therefore be stirred up, my friends and brethren, to enter into this important inquiry, What energy and power hath nature in her own constitution to pursue those paths of righteous conduct which she knoweth of, and to execute those purposes of well-doing whereof she is convinced already ?

When I meditate upon the unfavourable conditions with which moral life sits surrounded in this fallen and confounded world, it seems to me that no arm less powerful than the arm of a God can extricate her and set her on high above all her foes. Pleasure, with all her siren daughters arrayed for temptation's ends, come in mazy dance, bewraying the weakness of moral life, setting the blood on fire, and the heart into a gleeful mood ; and they bring in their hands each an intoxicating cup, one offering a draught to vanity, another to love, a third to fancy, a fourth to tender-hearted pity, a fifth to humanity ; and so through the open portals of every feeling they insinuate into the soul poisonous drugs in the season of youth, when the mouths of natural affection are open and thirsty ; they charm the soul, they cheat it, they shave its locks of strength, they cast bands upon it, as Delilah did upon the might of Samson. And who is the gray-headed man hearing me, who is the strong man, who is the young man, whom these daughters of pleasure and joy have not at one time or other entrapped into their wiles, and for a season prostrated all his moral strength ? And if haply any one doth stand the softness of these joyous allurements, and by strength of nature be enabled to overcome, then come anon an assailing host of another kind, arrayed under the banners of human approbation. They come with each a reproachful word on their lips. Not able to endure the steadiness of our purpose where they themselves have yielded up the struggle, friends, fellow-companions come mocking our stoical humours ; they reproach us for unkindness, want of companionship, want of gallantry, of spirit, of youthful joy. They seek us in our re-

tired studies, or our patient persevering industry ; they spread the banquet for our entertainment, they press us with kind hospitality to the feast, they bear down our purposes by the exceeding greatness of their regard, and we who would not yield to pleasure when addressing our selfish part, yield to the same pleasure invading us through the accessible avenue of friendship and society. And thus again are many more carried by a tide of solicitude from the rock of their moral resolution, and set adrift into the ocean of social enjoyment, no longer the masters of themselves.

Then cometh ambition, and the noble desire to rise in life and wield a sceptre of influence and power. And now becometh the tear and wear of manhood,—the game of policy, the strife of party, the tug of power, the opposition of principles, the gains and losses of various schemes. The vacuity of the mind which in youth besought the occupation of fine sentiment under feeling and soft enjoyment, now beseecheth the occupation of business affairs, schemes, wiles, stratagems, and arduous undertakings. All the tender brood of early life are unhoused to seek their domicile in minds of tenderer years, to cheer others, for we have weightier things to mind. Alas, alas ! we are cheated ; these tender occupants are the daughters of a softer, better stock than those ruffian passions and cool-blooded intriguing policies which now have gotten the hold. Oh, I do pity moral life in this stage and trial of life, for it is a miracle if it keep above in the confusion which these ambitious thoughts do breed. I could describe its feeble resistance and its overthrow, its trampling under foot, and its grave. But what avails it to do so before men who live in the heat and heart of ambition's empire, and can remark everywhere its ruinous ravages upon well-principled and noble action ? Behold the young man arise all glowing with liberal and manly sentiment, breathing patriotism, and haranguing against corruption, upholding disinterestedness and independence on every hand. Leave him alone for a few years, and what do you find ? The stripling patriot embracing and hugging that which he formerly denounced, and laughing at the new race of unfledged youth who are in the early stage of ambitious career. He laugheth at it as the inexpe-

rience of youth, or the hunting of place, and he opportunely casteth in the way lures and baits, never doubting to hook him and have him, and transfer him from the realm of his natural liberty into artificial places, where he may be taught graceful and becoming movements. Now, what is the plain meaning of this revolution, and what is the real cause? It meaneth that the breath of noble-mindedness was in the youth at first, the power of virtuous discernment, and virtuous feeling, and virtuous speech, but that when it came to action,—when he must commit his interests for virtue's sake, his ambitions, his worldly advancement, he could no longer stand, but gave in where so many had given in before him. This is the secret of the apostasy from principle which they complain of in every rank—the weakness of the hand of moral life.

These and so many other disadvantages have to be borne up against in the performance of what our conscience commends, that perhaps there is not one present who would not confess, without further demonstration, the point at issue, that moral life hath a weak hand to perform even that little which her eye discerneth. But if any one hesitates to confess, then without further ado I put it to the issue of a few categorical questions. Have not your hearts, while perusing the lives and heroic actions of noble men, burnt with approbation and resolved to walk in the same glorious footsteps; and gradually, upon descending into the arena of life, you have been withdrawn from your noble purpose into the tame commonplace virtue of the day, perhaps degraded into many of its popular vices? If you have, this is a proof of nature's inability to perform what she is able to discern. Again, have you ever found it necessary to disguise from the world your real purposes, and conceal from them parts of your actual character? As often as you have, you have confessed not only inferiority to your own ideal standard, but to the world's actual standard, which is infinitely lower. Again, have you ever had to criminate yourself in your private moments, or to confess your faults into the bosom of your friend, or before him whom you had injured or neglected? Such remorse is acknowledgments of feebleness to perform what conscience is convinced of, for where there is no conviction of conscience there can be

no remorse. Again, have you never from the pulpit, or from the voice of virtuous friends, or from the press, or even from the stage, had your soul fired against those forms of wickedness in which you indulged, and to which you returned to indulge again? Nay, verily, have not you, in your places as guardians of others, as parents, as masters, as teachers, as governors, given forth law and judgment against your very selves? But what availeth further discourse upon the weakness of men's character, compared with their intellect and their conscience? The thing is revealed in every conscious breast; every man hath it written on his forehead. Every life confesseth it in its lines and passages; broken resolutions speak it, defeated wishes weep over it, all prostrate virtues cry out against it, all meannesses confess it, all vices rejoice in it, all hypocrisies live by it, all passions prosper from it. All secret indulgences, public misdemeanours, all backslidings, and false promises would go into desuetude and die away, that moment the character of man became of equal strength with his conscience to feel and his intellect to discern the way.

Now, God knows, I have no cold-hearted or cruel intention in exposing these evil influences of the world, and evil tendencies of human nature to comply therewith. But it is necessary to make an exposition of the true state of the case before inquiring into the applications by which it may be solved. Having laid the wound bare, I come now to seek for remedies; and first, I ask the moralist, with whom I hold this friendly and free conference, what means he hath to propose for bringing the hand with which moral life acts into obedience of the heart with which moral life feels, or the eye with which she sees. His common remedies are good education of youth and good government of men. Good government, I acknowledge, is an excellent help, which the wisdom of society hath devised to make it the interest of men to walk orderly in those things whereof it is permitted governors to take cognisance. But, as we have already remarked, it is totally inadequate to the remedy of those interior evils of our condition, of which we at present treat. Governors and judges wait until the evil within the breast, or the evil of outward conduct comes to a height, escapes from control,

takes visible form, and makes head against another's rights, or against the common weal. Then it is their province to put forth their help and restrain the growing evil ; which evil, even then, they do not cure, but confine by force, or, by banishment or death, clean lop off from all hope of amendment. The fear of which fatal issue, I do allow, saves many characters from ruin, as the buoys planted upon the fatal rocks where vessels have split save many others from coming near destruction. But the helps we want are of a finer cast and a more frequent application. Something ever present, ever felt, something pouring vigour into the enervated framework of nature, and arraying her in defence against the temptations of the world. Something within the sacred circle of freedom which law toucheth not, may prevail with the same fearful influence which law hath beyond that circle, and which, while it operates by punishment upon fear may operate by rewards upon hope, by stimulus upon ambition, by persuasion upon unwillingness and timidity. For it is not by great things and by great occasions that the character of man is formed to worth or to worthlessness. Great crimes grow not at once, nor great virtues. The mind, like the body, grows strong by degrees, and parts not with its strength but by degrees. And being placed beyond the reach of outward accidents, it is more regular and slow in its progression to healthy or unhealthy conditions than is the body itself. It is the food which it feeds on daily, hourly, every instant that builds up or saps its strength,—the thoughts that come and go incessantly, the imaginations which flit about within the soul, the airy schemes that have not taken form, but wait occasion, the loves that flutter in confinement until they find an object to rest on. The heart is the great continent of actions where they grow, and utter themselves into the ear, or before the eye of the world as opportunity offereth. Therefore in this their sleeping embryo state, the giants of vice, the great anarchs of crime and confusion, are to be laid hands on, and bound in chains of good order. Give me a legislature, give me an executive, give me a monarch of good, and a senate of noble feelings, and an uncorrupted representative of all plebeian virtues, for the

government of the heart, that by debate and counsel timeously holden within the breast the good subjects may be encouraged, the bad ones kept in check, overawed, and never once allowed to lift their head;—this is the government I seek for my purpose, and nothing less than this will avail a jot. I want a pilot to keep the course and have the crew in subjection, to keep the ship out of peril, to keep the ship in the fairway, out of the neighbourhood of those dangerous places in the ocean of affairs which law hath buoyed and marked in its legislative charts. For this legislation of the heart and strengthening of the good powers within the breast, I ask the moralist again what he hath to offer? Early education is his answer; by which I understand tuition in the principles of moral conduct, and training in the ways of virtue. This is right. Now, may I ask him for his code of morality in which the youth are to be trained; for besides the Scriptures and works founded thereon I happen to know no code of morals out of which children could be taught. The works of the ancients on offices and ethics are argumentative books, which it would puzzle most men to follow; and modern books on moral philosophy and moral sentiment, which build not on religion, are equally unfit for the present necessity. But suppose they had such a hand-book as is wanted, I ask next upon what authority they are to enforce its precepts upon the young. For without religion I see none adequate to the end. If it be upon advantage, then who is to be judge of that advantage but the youth himself, whose judgments of advantage how weak they are against the present calls of inclination and occasions of evil every one doth know! If you refer to the better instincts of nature, as kindness, gentleness, the sense of truth, the desire of order and of happiness, and endeavour to feed into early maturity these good affections, and keep the evil ones down by discouragement, it is well; but now I ask for teachers able to do so. You would require an anatomist of the soul in every village, and a perfect puritan in every village school, a philosopher, a moralist, a magician of the soul, able to charm its good parts out of their natural weakness, and lay in deep and hidden places the evil influences which most generally over-

rule the inward state. But, granting that you had both such a handbook of morals and such divine moralists, I ask next what is to become of the youth when they leave such excellent tuition? How are they to meet temptation, actual temptation, when it bears down upon them in all the gaudy colours and alluring forms of life? How are they to stifle the affections which rise within to meet and embrace them? How are they to stem the popular currents of vanity and folly and vice which vary the surface of society like the waves of the sea, and agitate it beneath like the ground-swell and tossing of the deep? A man's natural strength of character, I do declare, is as insufficient to stem the streams of custom, however he may hate them and strive against them, as the bare arms of the swimmer is able to contend against the Gulf Stream of the ocean. The voice of solitary conscience is deafened by the popular outcry of approbation or disapprobation, as the voice of the sea-bird is in the womb of the rolling and roaring tempest. Do I blaspheme the truth of experience? God forbid. I wish there were no such experience; I wish that which I have said were blasphemy against the truth.

But how true it is, that all the checks which morals and education and government can put in are unavailing to the end of keeping a steady course of noble and virtuous life, let the observation of all ranks, from the highest to the lowest, testify; into which no father ever introduced a son, no mother ever introduced a daughter, without many cautions against their false appearances, and warnings against their evil customs. I shall not speak of the shipwrecks of noble youth, fairly launched from their parents' homes, in order to confirm my doctrine of moral weakness; but I will appeal to the anxieties of a father's breast and the prayers of a mother's heart over every one whom they have launched. Whence cometh this trouble if it be not from the difficulty and danger of the voyage, and the frequent wrecks that strew its course? from the consciousness in every parent's breast of the many rocks they have themselves narrowly escaped, and the many whereon they have struck, and wellnigh foundered outright? Every one may judge for himself whether, in setting

forth the evil of our moral nature and the insufficiency of the cures offered by the moralist, I have spoken according to the truth of his experience and observation; and to each man's judgment I willingly commit the cause.

Now, though time admonisheth us to be done, it would be most unfair to the feelings and interests of those who have heard these painful statements of an evil and an insufficient cure to stop here, without stating for their comfort and urging for their salvation the remedy which there is in the revelation of Jesus Christ. This addresseth itself at once to the weak men within the breast, and brings them into life and strength. It addresseth itself also to the strong men, and by main force binds them, or by persuasion converts them to good. The Lord hath entered into the field to moralise the life of men, and make it noble. For this end He hath laid down in His holy word categorical enumerations of the good and ill, not of actions merely, but of feelings and of thoughts, and written them so that he who runneth may read. To the one He hath promised to bestow all the welfare which this fallen world permitteth man to enjoy, and all the unbounded riches which the eternal world contains; threatening upon the other indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish. He hath given a code of penalties and punishments for the thoughts and intentions of the heart, and thereto He hath added a code of rewards and enjoyments, and set up the very system of inward legislation which we besought the moralists to furnish us withal. A handbook we have, and authority of the Almighty to sustain its every precept,—eternal blessing to reward the obedience, and eternal mercy to punish the transgression thereof. To induce us to undertake repentance and reformation, He hath brought within our reach an amnesty for all the past, and to encourage us to persevere He hath opened up a divine sustenance and strength for all the future. He hath promised that His Spirit shall enter into league with our spirit, in order to urge on the heavy work of regeneration. He hath summoned every affection of human nature to her Saviour, by clothing that Saviour in every useful and attractive quality. He hath, through the medium of that Saviour,

exalted every feeble affection of human nature to Himself, made the way open for the weakest to arise, and the most sinful to trust and rejoice before Him. There are remonstrances, there are arguments, there are soft persuasions, there are fears, there are hopes, there are high ambitions and deepest interests, there are consolations, there are recoveries, there are assurances of safety,—the whole artillery of human motives is brought into constant play in the page of divine revelation. After the eye of conscience hath thus been couched, and the heart set on fire to encourage the hand to perform, there is the divine example of Christ steering steadily through extremest perils a life of glory and honour, and the assurance of the indwelling Spirit of Christ to work the same effect upon all His followers. In every difficulty there is promise of direction, in every want there is promise of supply, and in every infirmity of strength. The gate of heaven is opened wide to the earnest prayer of every suitor; the Lord of heaven hath stricken a league, offensive and defensive, with every humble servant of His, and the gates of hell He hath promised shall never prevail against him.

He hath moreover unveiled human life, and uncovered to the heart its own obliquities. The devil and his angels He hath discovered upon every high place of this earth, where they sat concealed by darkness, or disguised by false appearances. He hath stripped earthly ambitions of their attractiveness, by shewing the end and meaning of the same. Temporal advantage He hath weighed in the balances of eternity and found wanting. The beauty that is visible, and the graces in which it arrays itself, He hath made suspected for the artifice which often lurks behind its witching mask. Soft luxuries He hath shewn to be thorny beds, human disapprobation to be often divine renown, and worldly fame to be often everlasting disgrace. Melody He hath disenchanted of its evil fascination; and He hath given a second sight into the forms and surfaces of things. All nature, from being a veil over the face of God, He hath changed into a glass where the face of God is to be beheld. The course of events, which was looked upon as a chance, an adventure, a lottery, He hath taught as a series of pregnant dispensations

for our good. The gloomy portals of the grave He hath enlightened ; the foul bed of corruption He hath made to blossom with vitality, with immortality—the body rising from the mouth of the grave, and shaking off its slimy film—the soul, purged of sin, and shaking off the darts of death—the judgment-seat in all its glory—heaven in all its eternal joy—hell in its undying, shrieking, racking torments—all, all, He hath discovered, changing the face of worldly things, and introducing to the eye of faith the imagery of things unseen and eternal.

By these means of inward legislation, of spiritual strengthening, of discovery of the world's proper nature, of new revelation of things unseen and eternal, hath the Lord our God and Saviour provided for the regeneration of our nature in His own divine and glorious image ; the power of which is exemplified daily before our eyes, by the conversion of men from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan to the living God, at home and abroad. These instruments are prevailing. Nothing can withstand them when they have taken a hold. The slave is not too much enslaved—the Hottentot is not too much benighted—the cannibal is not too much fleshed in blood, nor the South-Sea islander in cunning—the Frenchman not of too much levity, nor the Italian of too much craft, nor the Spaniard of too much superstition, nor the German of too much tameness, nor the Irish of too much buoyancy, nor the Scotch of too much fiery manhood, nor the English of too much indomitable freedom, that these instruments of the Almighty's grace shall not work upon each ungainly soul the fruits of His own Spirit, and the qualities of the new man created in righteousness and true holiness. Oh that the day were arrived when the word of God had free course over the earth, and the priests of the living God, who have the interests of men, not their own interests, at heart, were patronised upon this earth ! But let the word of God be prevented as it may—let the mouth of God be muzzled by impotent men as they dare—let them combine against Him and His Anointed to the very uttermost, and let priests of a priestly soul be shoved down for the advancement of those who have better friends in court, and richer arguments to sustain their claim,—come about it will,

come about it must. It is in the fates. It is written in the revealed fates that these instruments of divine grace shall yet strengthen the souls of men, sustain morals private and public, uphold good upon the earth, and prove a glorious reaping-time to your children of all the seed of God's word which you their fathers sow, and of all the labour which you take for the sake of the Lord and His Christ. Therefore cease not, men and brethren, to take help in all your weakness, strength in every need, victory in every struggle, from the weapons of your spiritual warfare. Have done with vain endeavours in the undirected, unaided power of moral nature. Betake yourselves to your stronghold, ye prisoners of hope. Sleepers, awake! and God will give you light. Let the diseased and sick at heart come to the great Physician of the soul, and they shall be healed. Come, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and Christ will give you rest. Take His yoke upon you which is easy, and His burden which is light, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

## XII.

### ON MORAL LIFE.

**H**ERETOFORE, in treating of that moral life which does without the co-operation of religion, we have looked chiefly at general principles, and argued the question of its weakness and instability after a philosophical manner, which may be thought rather inconvenient to this place because it is unusual. But being convinced that no instruction in religion has served a good end until it come home to one's own business and bosom, we do now, upon the introduction of whatever hath been said agreeable or convincing in our former discourses, take leave to call your attention to the more practical and personal views of this most momentous question.

There is in the world a class of men far more excellent than those upon the outworks of speculation, with whom we have already had to do,—the men within the walls, who carry on the active business of moral life, and fulfil honestly their stations in the world, ornamenting the walks of private life, and strengthening by their inflexible uprightness the framework of society. These virtuous and noble men, wherewith no society abounds more than that in which we live, find for their character so much acceptancy in the world, are so much esteemed, and trusted, and looked up to, and they dwell so much in the atmosphere of honourable and upright feeling, and have so much of the approbation of their own mind, walking in the light of moral enjoyment, that they never for a moment fancy they can be objects of displeasure to the Almighty, or inherit in the world to come any place than one of credit and renown. Being deluded by a fancied analogy between the world that is and the world that is to come, they content themselves with the presumption that those courses

which here find for them the favour of good men, and the happiness of an approving conscience, will find the same favour and happiness for them hereafter. And so they drop all concern about the things of revelation, and dwell in the lap of a tranquil security, which, if it were as safe as it is pleasant, it would be cruel to disturb.

To hold the question with these men is a much more difficult question than we lately held with moralists, legislators, economists, and the other disciples of some individual panacea of human nature. For there we sought with intellectual weapons to detect an intellectual fallacy, but here we have to dislodge from the hearts, not of speculative but of active men, a prejudice interwoven with all their sentiments of approbation and disapprobation, with all their experiences of happiness and unhappiness. We now deal not with talkers of virtue but with doers thereof, not with those who discern its rewards afar off but with those who daily feel and taste and handle them; men whom we revere more highly than the professors of the sciences, and with whom we confer more respectfully than we would with titled dignity and seated power; men who should be difficult to dispossess of convictions that are founded upon a thousand noble feelings and excellent actions, and to whose convictions we do therefore address ourselves with an unusual intermixture of friendliness, esteem, and conscious insufficiency, nor without prayer that God would enable us to justify His cause before the highest tribunal to which we have yet addressed it.

The principle upon which they ground their security of the divine approbation and reward it is altogether most natural to adopt. To believe that what is unseen will be kindred to that which is seen, and that the same favour and the same disfavour which accompany men's characters in the present life will continue to attend them in the life that is to come, is the only possible way for nature to connect the two states of existence. And if we lived in other quarters of the earth, where revealed religion was not known, and where men were fain to guide themselves by the light of nature, we should recommend them carefully to follow after whatever had received the approbation of most wise men, yielded tranquillity to their

own breast, and nourished happiness in those with whom they were concerned,—this to adopt as their code and stand by it, whatever might be the consequences. For in the absence of revelation there is no test of truth so good as the consent of wise and good men, the approbation of our own feelings, and the advancement of human welfare. Therefore the laudable men to whose case I now address myself, in following after the life which I described, and in presuming that all will be well, take the very course which enlightened nature in the absence of revelation would direct to.

But we are living, not in the absence, but in the presence of a revelation ; not in the light of nature, but in the light of divine inspiration. This introduces a new element into the question, which must be dealt with in one way or another. The revelation must either be taken or it must be rejected. If you reject it, upon a deliberate examination and disbelief of its authenticity, then you stand exactly as if it had not been given, and there is no question between us but the previous question of its credibility, to which we do not here apply ourselves. But if you reject it not, but receive and revere it, which is the case in hand, yet follow up the independent style of moral life described above, then there is a large and broad basis for argument, which we will now do our endeavour to set forth.

If the soul had possessed within herself light to guide her into all the high and honourable paths of virtue, and perseverance to bear all the severe exercises of self-denial and resignation which virtue demands, and if, moreover, the highest rewards of this world had waited upon the highest attainments of virtuous men, there would never have been revealed from heaven any direction, or aid, or encouragement to that which was already sufficiently known and patronised ; for God, by adding the powers of the world to come, did not mean to extinguish any argument for uprightness which exists in the constitution of the present world ; and in proposing clear light from on high, He did not mean to put out the light which already existeth in the human mind ; and in superadding the grace of His Holy Spirit to strengthen man, He did never mean to indulge the natural

powers of man in sluggish repose, and bring him up to the mark of his high calling by a strong exertion of almighty power. But it was the weakness of flesh and blood to accomplish the convictions of the Spirit, and the ceaseless warfare between these two parts of human nature, or, to speak more truly, the constant subjection of the immortal to the mortal part, and the incapacity of the soul to struggle into the light of divine and moral knowledge through this oppression of flesh and blood, that moved the gracious and merciful God to send His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to redeem those who believe from the darkness and bondage in which they were holden of sinful nature. And wherever moral life refuses the help of God's word and Spirit, and tries the battle in her own strength, it will discover her weakness—first, clearly to discern her way; secondly, to follow the way which she doth discern; and thirdly, to put up with the mistreatment which she receives. Upon these three particulars we would open up the imperfection of moral life, and shew the kindly assistance and security which is lent to it by things spiritual and eternal, at once doing justice to religion, and kindness to morality, in bringing to the light the Christian armour, in the strength of which alone she will prevail.

The inability of the mind clearly to discern its way to that which is holy and just and good, and the light which is shed upon its path by the revelation of God, this is the topic upon which we are first to discourse, for the justification of God's goodness, and for the perfection of those who already love the ways of virtue. Now, if in this discourse it had been our aim not to help moral life out of the straits with which it is compassed around in this sinful and benighted world, but to make an exposure of, and triumph over its weakness, we should at once have come in and taken advantage of the divisions which have existed as to the first principles of morality,—a question which still divides the great moralists of the age. But, though we should not be justified in doing so for the sake of victory over morality, which is but a weaker sister of religion, and in the absence of religion to be preferred above every other earthly object, we are not only justified but called on by the nature of this topic to set forth

the small satisfaction which the inquiring people of all ages have been able to obtain upon the very first principles and great end of moral life. In ancient times they divided upon what was the chief good which a man should follow after, some placing it in obeying the internal admonitions of conscience, or virtue as they called it; others in consulting for present happiness and welfare. And in spirit the same as these, there are at the present time two parties among those who inquire into morals, the one referring to inward feeling as their guide, the other consulting for usefulness alone. Now, before entering to say one word upon the insufficiency of either of these guides, I would remark how imperfect and unsteady in the details that must be whereof the main and moving spring hath not been consented upon. But, giving to moral life the advantage of both guides, of internal feeling or conscience, and outward advantage, I am still able to shew that it is altogether insufficient of itself to enlighten the steps of man. For man, it must be observed, is not a recluse philosopher delivered up to the calm enjoyment of contemplation, nor is he a deep metaphysical thinker, able to inspect and weigh the claims of abstract truth, but he is a creature of many wants, for which he hath to find a supply—of many weaknesses, for which he hath to find defence—of many affections and passions, which lead him as powerfully (to say the least) to that which is evil as they attract him to that which is good. Not one in ten thousand has the status of a philosopher, not one in a hundred thousand finds himself, when he arrives at man's estate, able to think abstractly and closely; and if he were, not one in a million has time and opportunity. Our youth, when the seeds of thought as well as character are planted, is passed under the superintendence of laborious and honest perhaps, but certainly not intellectual, parents, who are not able, without some book like the Bible, to discover the principles of good and ill for themselves, much less teach them to their children. And were there not in schools the works of the great spiritual Teacher, could we look from hard-toiling men, labouring also for a livelihood, for clear revelation and instruction upon those things which the great men of ancient and modern times have not been able

to agree upon? Look, then, upon the world as it is toiling for bread, and resting its weary limbs for the renewal of toil, trained in the bosom of surrounding vice, ignorant of most things except the art of procuring and preparing food, and tell me what insight such a world could of itself obtain into the right and wrong of human thought, conversation, and action? I am far from adopting the notion of many moderns, that there is no voice within a man to pronounce between right and wrong, and that all we have to look to is the useful consequences of what we do. I do think that it is of the very essence of human nature to be able to recognise the good, the honourable, the noble, the praiseworthy in conduct, to approve it upon the first hearing, and instinctively shout over it applause; and, moreover, that if man were in a condition leisurely to peruse the leaves of his conscious spirit, and had the means of throwing off the disguises of corrupt passions and affections, he might come to taste the good and ill of all ideal things, as the palate of his mouth tasteth the bitter and the sweet of all corporeal things. And when through Christ Jesus a man hath gotten the victory over the body of sin and death, then this dormant, drowsy faculty of perceiving good and ill bestirs itself into a new life and activity, and the soul is as it were couched in its eyes, and perceives new appearances in the customs and habits of the world, and in the book of God it discerneth its ancient and its present self as in a mirror, and it groweth like the gods, discerning good and ill. Yes, it is in a man as fire is in the flint and lightning in the lowering cloud; but there it slumbereth, unfelt, unseen, under adverse and untoward conditions. No one who is not obstinately wedded to his opinions can refuse to acknowledge that the people—by which word I mean not labouring classes, but middling and higher classes also—hold no consultation with their souls upon the proper way of regulating their life, but consult first their appetites, and indulge them within the scope of their fortunes and the laws, then the custom of their rank, and go with it generally as far as it will take them; and if it cast them off, fall into a lower; if it occupy them not, mount into higher. After the custom they consult their interest, some few their

taste and humour, but fewer still, very few indeed if you except regenerated men, their consciousness of right and wrong. It hath ever been so among the body of the people, and therefore I am entitled to conclude, that whatever power there may be in a man to perceive, is so overlaid with adverse contingencies as to be with hardly any exceptions completely benighted and eclipsed.

I confess at the same time, that in the laws of the statute-book, and the customs of society, and the domestic customs, and also the religious customs, by which the generality of high and low do chiefly regulate their procedure, there is much virtue and morality intermingled: and that even when, loose from these, a man would consult for his own individual well-being of body and mind and outward condition, he must play very much into the hand of good moral behaviour. For the only foundation of law is the advantage and welfare of the whole, towards which in all states it tendeth less or more, according to the wisdom of those who give law; and whenever it tendeth otherwise, the state is about to be convulsed, for a state, like a man, will never suffer pain without endeavouring to relieve itself. And in the centre of society, though customs very injurious may come up, and for a while have a sway, they will not prevail over the strong principle of the social happiness; and in the long run they will be rejected. Also in the large liberty of action which law and custom have not yet brought into distinct form, it is so ordained by the Governor of the world that upon the whole good and upright courses shall in the end best succeed. So that it comes to pass, that though few men consult the tablets of their hearts, which much ignorance of the spirit within and much dalliance with the flesh have nearly hidden from their power to reach, still, in consulting the ordinances of law and custom and self-interest, they do in no small degree approximate to the form and aspect of virtue.

But will any man tell me that this is virtue, merely from fear of punishment by law, or censure by our friends, or personal loss, to be kept and constrained to virtuous courses? Then the slave who for fear of the lash trespasseth not his master's orders, the money-changer who to increase his

trade punctually pays and punctually exacts his payments, were the most virtuous of men. Call you it virtue and morality in fashionable people to keep fashionable equipage that they may keep up their rank? Then you must call it virtue in the workman who hath fallen amongst a dissipated crew, to go to the ale-house that they may not scorn him. Call you it virtue in a man to defer to his superiors in order that he may keep their good graces? Then I call it greater virtue in a man to flatter them, that he may make profit of their vanity. Call you it virtue in a man not to defraud lest the law should find him out? Then I call it virtue in a man who secretly plunders your house, lest the law should detect him doing it publicly.

There is no virtue in deferring to custom of any kind : the virtue lies in proving the customs within our own breast, and deferring to them or dissenting from them accordingly. There is no virtue in taking honest measures only for the sake of our advantage : the virtue lies in taking the measures, whether advantage or disadvantage follow. In short, there is no virtue in anything which our mind doth not approve. Virtue is the deference to inward conviction, not to outward custom ; and seeing so few look inward to try the forms and customs and observances which they keep, I say again, the quantity of real virtue which nature brings forth of her own discernment is exceeding small indeed.

What therefore follows but this, that whatever power may render a man fit to discern between the evil and the good, is little exercised in the commerce and affairs of life, which are an outward homage to the eye of men, but seldom an inward homage to the shrine of virtue. If there resided within men a steady light to guide their course, to that they would give their heed, and not look outwardly, for nothing delights a man so much as to act from his own conviction. But the trouble of coming at conviction is so exceeding great, and we are so conscious of being duped by our passions and prejudices, that we render up our free-will to outward customs and habits, and seldom take a step upon self-decision.

When Scripture speaks of the natural darkness of the human mind, and its total alienation from the love and obedience

of God, it does not assert anything concerning the nature of the soul at first, but concerning the condition which a soul comes to under the influence of things seen and temporal. And certainly, if the nature of the tiger or the lion are to be ascertained from the development of their instincts in their outward actions, the nature of man ascertained from the same source must be pronounced foreign to the love and reverence of God. He may defer to law and custom, to friendship and love, to patriotism and universal benevolence, but unto God he doth not naturally defer. Nay, he may defer to his own sense and consciousness of what is right, which is the true strain of virtue so rarely to be found, and still refuse all deference to God. In this consists a second and deeper blindness than the former,—the one in not recognising the claims of our own conscious spirit, the other in not recognising the claims of the invisible God. I would fain both believe and represent the best of moral life, for it is the thing on earth which is next to the best ; but this I confess I can neither believe nor represent, that it naturally comes to recognise the right and sovereignty of God over all its ways. I have seldom found it following out its own convictions in the face of custom and interest ; this doth not occur to more than one man in a thousand, and when it doth occur it proceeds more frequently from prejudice, or wilful love of singularity, than from calm consideration and deliberate judgment ; but this I have never once found upon the earth, that the man who did so proceed by the rule of his own conscience did give the glory to God, who made his conscience able to discern the right from the wrong. This surely is the highest faculty of man, to discern the distinctions of moral truth, which is the highest grade of truth ; and this surely is the highest gift of man, to carry into practice those convictions which others do generally trample under foot. And, therefore, when such a gifted man stands forth in the creation of God, such a truly honest man, he is, in the poet's language, the noblest work of God, and as his Creator's noblest work, it behoveth him to carry himself with the utmost gratitude and acknowledgment. But this nature doth not teach, but she teacheth her old lesson of admiring her own noble self, not Him whose

noble handiwork she is. Why is it that patriotism in every civilised country hath its noble list of names embalmed in the memory of revolving ages? Why in every country hath friendship its noble patterns, and love, and every other relationship which connects man with man ; but religion (that is, religion independent of revelation) hath no roll of saints, no saints of nature's making? Why, but because nature can originate and perfect every relationship between man and man, between man and society, between man and outward nature, but the relationship between man and God nature altogether fails either to originate or perfect.

We infer therefore, upon the whole, that in the most of men, circumstanced as they are, nature is not equal to the task of revealing the right and wrong of things, so that they shall act thereby ; and where in the few cases she doth, she never makes the further step of raising their thoughts to God as the being to be acknowledged for this sight of the mind, and obedience of the life. For both these objects revelation is required, and is the only thing that availeth. Its first effect is to bring a man into closer communion with his soul ; its second, into closer communion with God. These effects it accomplishes first by delivering him from the impediments which eclipsed his insight into himself. These are many and various. Fleshly lusts, which are a suffocation of the soul ; sinister and equivocal aims, which make the soul, like a broken picture, cast back no distinct images ; prejudices of the understanding, and prejudices of the passions and affections, which are as it were a counterfeit of the soul ; schemes of mere selfishness, which derange the soul's better parts, and present her in disgusting forms ; idolatries of outward things, which carry her altogether away from the observation of herself ; finally, idolatry of herself, which intoxicates her with vanity, and presents her in every fantastical guise. All these hindrances, deceptions, and disguises the word and Spirit of God doth remove out of the way and allow the soul to display herself truly. And whereas in the narrow occupations of each man few of his feelings have a call to come forth, the word of God doth as it were by a muster-roll call on them by name, and appoint to each the proper occasion on which to

shew itself. On which occasion, if the heaven-invoked feeling be off its post, the soul discovers its defective discipline, and hath a lesson of its weakness ; if the heaven-invoked feeling be on its post, then she discovereth her divine order, and hath a lesson of her renewed state. It is thus she is both brought upon watch, instructed in her offices, and constantly able to discern, not only her own responses, but also her own performances of good and ill. The veils are removed, and a thousand eyes are implanted ; conscience comes alive, reverence of custom for its own sake dies, consultation of self-interest is foregone, and the soul is its own guide, its own master. Then commences true morality, that which flows fresh and pure from conscience, the fountain of morals. Every action becomes a high act of morality, proceeding from no dubious or polluted source.

But while this resurrection of inward feeling is going on, the great Cause and Promoter of it is constantly acknowledged. It is seen to be from the hand of God, because its suggestion came from the word of God, its guidance thence, and to His Spirit the triumph is due ; so that the communion which is established between life without and conscience within brings another junction and communion—between conscience within and God above, in whom we live, and move, and have our being.

### XIII.

#### ON MORAL LIFE.

**T**HIS question, which we have agitated of late, is not a question between the recluse advocates of two opposite systems, in which you are concerned only as the hearers and arbitrators of the dispute ; but it is a question in which the eternal interest of each one that heareth is concerned, and which is advocated for no less a prize than the salvation of your souls. The moralists, against whom I array the argument, are not any set of writers or speculators, but as many of you as have not yet embosomed divine truth in your affections, nor made it the moving spring of your conduct, but rule your lives by custom, honour, virtue, morals, or something else which doth not deduce itself habitually from the word of God. So that it is a mistake in any one to fancy that I have been of late but a defender of the faith ; I have been a propagator of the faith, endeavouring to shake your confidence in those principles of conduct which you have adopted, by shewing how inadequate they are to lead out the train of an honourable, happy, and consistent life. In this argument we have abstained, on purpose, from all reference to the gain or loss of a future world, that we might lose the ear of no one, through his want of faith in things unseen and eternal. We have simply contended whether the man who takes his instructions and his principles from the word of God, or the man who draws them elsewhere, hath the better security for possessing his soul in peace, contentment, and joy, and his life in usefulness, honour, and nobility. No one can disbelieve that there is a wide difference between a man that is happy and a man that is miserable, between a man that is mean and a man that is noble, between a man that is virtuous and a man that is

vicious. These are not mere verbal distinctions ; they are names for the wide extremes of man's present condition. They are not trifling and insignificant objects in the course of our life, but the great shoals and rocks which we struggle to avoid, and the wide fertile continents which we would fain reach, possess, and enjoy. These being high matters, where all are alike interested, we have undertaken to examine before you all, whether those who look to the Scriptures for their guide, and work their course by the powers of the world to come, or those who depend upon the resources of nature, and work their course by the motives of the present world, are better furnished for reaching the good, and avoiding the evil, of the present state.

Now it will be manifest, that in thus limiting the issue to the things of the present life, we did as it were work the mine of truth upon the lowest level, and at the greatest disadvantage. For the men before me, for whose sake I discourse, are men who both receive and follow after the things of the world to come, believing that there is some awful division of destinies within the veil of death, more terrible than aught of vice or virtue, meanness or nobility, happiness or misery, which takes place before the scenes. But these better things to come we did hold, and shall a little longer continue to hold, in abeyance ; first, because we can make the argument steadfast and convincing without them ; but chiefly because the various schools for directing human conduct—moralists, philosophers, legislators, and economists—have of late grown into such self-conceit and saucy contempt of things unseen and eternal, that when any advocate of them standeth forth, they salute him silently in their minds with Athenian courtesy : "What will this babbler say?" Therefore to win the audience of their ear, if any such were present, or to win the audience of those whom they have diverted by their shibboleths from the still small voice of gospel guidance, we were fain to enter beneath that little shed of theirs, which they have foolishly called the wide world of speculation, and we have held the strife with all the disadvantage of its confinements, that if haply they might think it worthy of their prowess to contend with a Christian, they might be allured forth into the open field of man's ever-

lasting interests, from which they have withdrawn their thoughts to such a degree, that I question whether, for the last century, you shall find a moralist, a legislator, or an economist who giveth you to wit that he hath any speculation of God or eternity in those provinces of thought which Bacon, and Newton, and Locke opened up to him, and in which they found God at every turn.

But while for the present I limit the question thus to things seen and temporal, it is, as hath been said, only to draw with me a greater company and a fuller consent when I shall advocate it through all the interests of eternity as well as time. For man is not by himself in creation companionless, without a Head to whom he oweth a high allegiance, and whose authority over him should therefore come into the question ; neither is time the sum-total of his existence, nor the masquerade of life the end and purpose of his generation. And those who wrap up the question of his dignity within the temporary and territorial condition of the present life, are a kind of sacrilegious spoliators of the soul's immortal and eternal essence, who may, for the sake of those they delude, be patiently dealt and argued withal, but who, for their wretched maiming of the head and heart of the soul's dignity, are in their own right well entitled to sore chastisement from the great Guardian and Conservator of our condition. It were not less wicked and insane in a mother to train her child as if it were never to come to manhood, so swathing its limbs as if it were always to be a baby, so feeding it as if it were always to be a nursing, and so instructing it as if it were always to be a child, as it is in any one who knows of life to come, to limit his application only to things present, which are but the empty husks of good, and to the present movements of virtue, which are but the timorous uncertain gait of one in the leading strings of childhood ; and therefore we would sorely entreat you if we did not speedily remove the question from that little nest of thought wherein those with whom we have to do have nestled themselves, and would nestle all the sons of men, keeping their souls for ever callow and unfledged, and hindering them of their natural rightful flights into the pure regions of heaven.

Nevertheless, though this be the height to which our argu-

ment tendeth, we linger yet a little upon the inferior ground in order to confer with the gainsayer upon another point, and shew him the utter weakness and vanity of his system at the very best. Heretofore we entered into argument upon the inability of nature to discover a sufficient or exact code of morals by which to guide herself, and we shewed from the history of the world that no such code had she ever devised. Also, that now-a-days every child among us being educated in the morality of the Scriptures, and through a thousand channels deriving into his soul the spirit of the Christian discipline, it hath become a second nature for us to know it, though we cannot trace the knowledge to the divine source from which it came; so that the moralists of these times affect a purity, and refinement, and sufficiency of guidance, hardly inferior to that which the Christians hold. I am not going to enter into argument with them as to the sources from whence this came. I will strictly give it to them as if it were their own discovery and proper possession; and having conceded this, which is all they can desire, I will shew that they are no nearer their end of securing the virtue and happiness of human life. I will allow to every one who heareth me the quiet appropriation of all that moral feeling and sentiments, which nevertheless I believe they have entirely from the unperceived influence of the word of God, and shew that until they adopt all the principles of our faith as well as all the precepts of our morality, they will find themselves utterly unable to keep that which they know to be right.

The moral sentiment and conduct which Christ enforceth and which is now wrought in a good degree into the framework of society, is only a part of the Christian scheme, which being divided from the rest liveth no longer, but becomes inert and inactive. Christian morality is not a regimen for man in a natural state, but for man in a spiritual state. It is the light and easy, the willing and graceful movements of a spirit informed with divine knowledge, and renewed in divine feeling; but to a spirit unrenewed by the operation of faith and the Holy Spirit, it is a discipline hard, difficult, and unattainable. This may savour to you of mystery; it is not, however, mysterious,

but agreeable to constant experience. What makes a husband labour with such assiduity for his wife and children? It is the love he beareth them. If there were not that previous affection within his breast, he must find some other inducement to cheer his tedious industry; and in the absence of some strong affection stirring his rest-loving limbs, and his quiet-loving mind, he would feel it a heartless slavery, to be endured only through fear and incited by the lash. In like manner, the affection for power or fame or wealth must be present in the mind before we will undertake unwearied services for the state, or perils for it by flood and field. And before a people will make any sacrifices for their country, there must be a strong spirit of patriotism already within their breasts. And so, through every region of human activity, before we will submit to unwelcome toil or unpleasant discipline, there must be a strong and noble affection lodged within the heart, else it will prove a heartless task, and be forsaken at the earliest opportunity. There is a spirit of loyal love by which alone the soul of man can be won to great achievements, which being kindled within the breast all difficulties vanish. It is the electrical spark of the human system which moves at will all the sluggish materialism, and being exerted overmuch tears and shatters the human frame and the framework of human life under its wild and ungovernable fury.

Now the Christian discipline being a terrible discipline to flesh and blood, and passing far in its enterprises the bounds of any other discipline, requireth a larger inspiration of this moving principle in order to make it easy and light. It casteth reins upon every passion, and lays under exaction every power of body and of mind. The heart it probeth in all its tenderest parts, and searcheth through its most inward recesses. Things dearer than a right eye it plucketh out, things stronger than a right hand it loppeth off. It maketh no account of interests even to the loss of life. It disdaineth policy; it steeleth itself against power. Soft dalliance it abjureth—pride it abaseth—vanity it casteth away—the world it faceth—yea, it standeth to its arms against a world in arms. And cheerfully it doth all this, not spitefully—of free-will, in good

humour, yea in tenderness, in perfect love. It suffereth long and is kind, it envieth not, it is not puffed up, it vaunteth not itself, it rejoiceth not in evil, but it rejoiceth in the good.

Now I ask for the electrical spark to move into free activity these unwilling parts of the soul. In every quarter nature sets in adverse. I ask the mighty trident of nature's Lord to turn its streams the other way. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, the sweetness of revenge, contempt, not forgiveness, are nature's reprisals. Self-indulgence, self-applause, not self-denial, are her delight. Poverty of spirit, reproach, and persecution are her horror. And we ask how these very things are to become to her as her meat and her drink? In some respects, indeed, the world hath fallen in love with our discipline, and makes a fashion of copying it. Their courtesy is Christian courtesy, their manners are Christian manners, their purity, in mixed companies, is Christian purity, and the sentiment which it breathes is often Christian sentiment; which their aping of our state, proveth more than anything else the difficulty of adopting our spirit. For who doth not know that in their courtesies, and affectations of Christian sentiment and purity, the surface of the soul alone is moved, and beneath it is tortured by under-currents of envy, and jealousy, and malice, and impurity, and much more which need not be described? The spirit, the natural elements of the spirit, are not laid. They grudge the sacrifice of the show, they growl deep against the temporary suppression. I want something to allay their hostility, and win their hearts over to the other side,—to inspire them against their former selves, and bring out the Christian discipline, not in form and words, but in very deed.

Until the world can possess themselves of the means of doing this, the possession of our pure sentiments and morals will serve them in no stead. They have the chart, but they have not the wind to fill their sails. The current, the gale, everything is against them, and until they be better furnished the knowledge of the course will avail them nothing. I come back, therefore, again to the Scripture language. The heart must be changed, out of which are the issues of life. The spirit must be renewed in the image of God. The Holy Ghost must work in us to will and to do of His good pleasure.

A morality without a theology is nothing, and I question whether it exists independent of a theology any further than law, or custom, or convenience sustains it. Now it is a small part of morality that established law sustaineth—only that extreme part which is conversant with another's vested interests. Custom wardeth an inward circle of morality, but still it is confined to that which is visible. All that passes within the breast unseen, or in secret places unknown, or with confederates undivulged,—all ideas and schemes of things, all those various emotions which the varying countenance expresseth, and all more inward which is hidden behind the scenes,—remain unwarded either by law or custom. Now in this is the great stress and strain of Christian morality. The apostle goes so far as to say that the law was not made for a godly man, and that we are not under the law; which meaneth that we never come near to its brink, but carry on our life far removed from the things which it prohibits;—unless, indeed, the law arm against us, when persecution begins; and then, according to the old Covenanting adage, where persecution begins allegiance ends. That is, we owe no further obedience, but must patiently take the detriment, if by no means we can defend ourselves from its coming. To secure all this—which, properly speaking, is the only province of morality—there must be a theology, a divine affection generated; otherwise it will be trampled under the foot of man.

There is a maxim indeed current in the world, that virtue is its own reward; but it seems to live only in the mouths of men. And I dare say I might appeal it to any one here present, whether they have found the present rewards of virtue able to sustain them in virtuous courses. I allow that what of virtue the world approves may, through fear of the world's reproach, find favour in our sight. But when the world disapproves, or when the world hath no consciousness, as is the case in Christian life, which is hid with Christ in God, and which the world knoweth not, I question whether this discovery was ever made by any one till he had tasted deeply and bitterly of self-indulgence, and fled into the arms of self-denial, as a refuge from disease or from the grave. Howbeit the cases are so few, if any, in which this principle is found

sufficient for the conservation of conscience, that I stay not now at present from the question of the world's general necessity.

This argument which we hold with the moralists is of the last importance, being for no less a stake than the immortal souls of men, and the credit of God's gracious revelations, and therefore it should be argued, not in a course of speculation, as we have hitherto done, but should advance into the open field of the soul's capacities, and be maintained before all her feelings and all her interests. The question being always this, which of us hath the best instruments for taking a purchase over the true dignity and happiness of human life? When morals do not borrow of religion, they amount to no more than a code of laws, without any authority to enforce them except custom, the sense of duty, and the eye of man,—whereof we have already shewn the insufficiency,—and without any rewards or punishments, to give them the true force of laws, except it be that reward which virtue is to itself, a reward which, however it be talked of, hath been found in all ages and in all countries, and I may almost say in all men, to be quite unequal to the task of keeping the ways of life parallel with the rules of conscience. But when moralists borrow of religion, as in all countries they do less or more, and in these Christian countries they have especially done, though without acknowledgment, then the question changes its form, and becomes more of a theological nature than it hath hitherto been; and in this point of view we are now to contest it. We are willing to allow them all the advantage of that science which hath lately sprung into existence, under the name of natural religion, though it be gathered from a thousand lights which revelation hath kindled; and, yielding them this, we are still to point out their feebleness in comparison with one who goes by faith in the revelation of God.

The true nature of obedience to laws is little understood amongst us, though we be the most wisely governed of nations, and the most jealous of our national liberty; for it is thought to depend chiefly upon the punishment which sanctions the law, whereas it rests upon the spirit of loyalty and fealty that is begotten in the people. Once let a people be

heartily in love with the institutions of their native soil,—once let them be growing unto greatness, and flourishing under the olive reign of happiness, their laws are obeyed almost instinctively, through love and affection to the constitution of society. Now, let this same people become discontented in their breasts, dissatisfied with their condition, alienated from the ruling powers, and unprosperous in their vocations, and it comes to pass that those laws which were wont seldom to be called upon, are not able to constrain the turbulent mind, but are violated at every risk. The fitness of the laws, therefore, to the condition of the people, their adjustment to equity, their encouragement of benevolence, and their general tendency to happiness, and their general coincidence with the good principles already implanted in the hearts of the people, this—not the severity of their sanctions, or the strictness with which they are enforced—constitutes their strength, and gains for them stability and acquiescence. There is a noble nature in man that rejects fear and force, but yields softly to rectitude and justice. Therefore, of all governors, it ought to be the chief aim to keep the people in good heart and contentment with their condition; to which end they ought to act honestly and uprightly, that by the natural love of good order and justice may be kept up that spirit of patriotism and loyalty which is the surest safeguard of the laws.

Now the Almighty, in His government, hath eminently adopted this method of governing. He hath not left His laws to stand by the fear of hell, where the disobedient shall be punished, nor hath He been content to square them by the essential rules of right existing in the breast, but He hath made them tend to the peace of the breast within, and to the happiness of outward life; and, above all, He hath laid the foundation of allegiance and loyalty to Himself, of a divine patriotism—if I may so express myself—which is a fund of obedience within the breast, as instinct is in the breast of a child, affection in the breast of a wife, attachment in the breast of a servant, and patriotism in the breast of a loyal nation. It is out of this provision made by Him for winning the hearts of His people, that He prevails upon them at first

to enter themselves under His government; the heartfelt delight there is in keeping His laws carries them on, but the punishment that is thereby escaped is little thought of, if it be thought of at all. In this we have an unspeakable advantage over the moralists. They have no means of lodging in the heart such a divine fealty. So that, even could they devise laws of equal wisdom and equal aptness, they have nothing to induce the people to come under their yoke. But in the character of our God, of the Christian's God, which we are about to divulge, we have that which commends Him to the soul, and ingratiates Him with all her affections, and makes her feel to Him as a son to a father, or a wedded wife to her husband.

If I were going nicely into the question of reason's theology, I should side with Hume, whom I regard as the best advocate of revelation this country has produced, inasmuch as he hath swept away the whole of that structure falsely called natural religion, and shewn what a bare and comfortless view reason, justly exercised, must take of God's character and providence, proving what a nonentity natural theology is, and how to any theology revelation is absolutely necessary. But, granting the principles of their natural religion, that there is one God who made the heavens and the earth, and the soul of man, who ruleth over all things after the pleasure of His will—what, I ask, is there here to produce love or obedience in the mind? Power doth not beget obedience, but rather resistance in the mind. Dominion begetteth fear not love,—awe, and perhaps timorous slavery, but never hearty and willing obedience. We know that the Emperor of China is absolute in his dominions, but we love him not the more, and have no disposition to obey him further than he can reach us. Before the mind will yield its affections to a mind more powerful than itself, whether that power lie in wisdom, rule, or physical strength, it must know on what principles and for what ends it putteth forth its superior power; if these ends be congenial to justice and happiness, we naturally yield assent and admiration. And when the happiness is produced upon ourselves, we yield likewise gratitude and affection. Here, therefore, is a previous question,

to which the moralist must gird himself, before we will yield him one tittle of advantage from the knowledge of God, the Creator and the Governor of the universe—the question how this power and government are put forth. Now, if he address himself to this previous question which we have moved, he will find himself at a stand. For this world hath such mixed fates, and the men in it such various fortunes, that nothing regular can be brought out of its confusion. And though I allow there is a tendency of things to run right, they are so marred by natural and moral accidents, by storms and revolutions, by contentions and wars, that it is beyond the power of any skill to reduce them into justice, or draw from them a character of mercy. Hume, who had no favour for our cause, is the advocate of the inference in later times; in ancient times it was the conclusion of every school of philosophers. To what, therefore, serveth this God of reason, out of whose government reason can bring no principles of good order? Not certainly to generate such an attachment as should bind upon the heart the rules of morals. And I fearlessly assert that there never is any such attachment upon the heart by this natural theology; on the other hand, I have found it removing God far out of sight,—subliming Him, as the Epicureans did, far out of our sphere,—multiplying His avocations among the various boundless orbs of space, so as to leave Him neither time nor care for our puny affairs—and, in truth, making their theology work against their morality, rather than work in its behalf. These followers of nature have, moreover—I know not whence derived, except in a crude manner from Scripture—this notion prevalent in their schools, that God, if He keep account, or is to hold a reckoning of human affairs, is very good and merciful; and as He hath constituted us weak, will judge us as such, and allow for all our frailties; which latter part of their theology fights directly against their morality, destroys it, and opens the door of all indulgences. They had better leave their theology alone, therefore, for it helps them not, but fights against them with both its hands.

What, then, have they left? A morality without a theology, a code of laws without any power from whence they emanate,

without any tribunal to look after their obedience. And when did ever such an unauthorised, unsanctioned code find power to constrain unto its service the will and interests of men? Never since the world began. It will be obeyed while it suits our inclinations, or while custom sanctions it, or while interest is promoted by it, or the good graces of those we esteem secured. But power hath it none to penetrate into the heart, and divide the empire of the affections, and give light to the eye of the conscience, and command the reins of the will, and then the helm of conduct. To take such a sovereign seat in the inward man, is the prerogative of something which must be otherwise sustained than any code of laws this world hath seen—sustained by gentle power and influence, like that which sustaineth the law of families, or the law of friendship, or the law of tender affection.

And if we are not able to shew some such tender and powerful ties wherewithal to bind the Christian code upon the heart, we allow it likewise to be utterly ineffectual for the end of governing the inward parts. And to seek this is the task to which we now address ourselves, after having disclosed the weakness of natural morality, as we have done above.

The Christian religion is more after the nature of an affection than of a command. It hath a command, but that command dependeth on love, not on sovereignty. It abhorreth servitude, and favoureth hearty consent. Hence the apostle throws off with indignation the yoke of bondage, and insisteth that we are not under the law, but under grace. There is a sovereignty, doubtless, in God, whereby He could have compelled us to obedience, as He compelleth the winds and waves, and other elements of nature, and regulates the harmonious motions of the universe. But He chooseth not to proceed after that method. He ruleth not by might but by right. A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of His kingdom. Therefore, it is vain in your moral-preachers to think of schooling the people into Christianity by laying down the law to them, Sabbath after Sabbath; instead of which they should enamour them of the nature of God, and so lodge the affection which will hunger and thirst for ways whereby to testify itself. And it is as absurd in the mystics to persuade

to Christianity by holding forth the stern decrees and absolute sovereignty of God, which doth but revolt all the affections of the heart, and paralyse the powers of the understanding. In which two methods of preaching we have another palpable instance of the meeting of extremes. But the true method in which religion in the Scriptures seeks to bind itself upon the heart and life of man, is by exhibitions of the most excellent, amiable, and generous character of God, His unceasing regard for man, His wonderful scheme for our salvation, His preparation for our everlasting happiness and glory. They win upon the heart a surpassing favour for the Governor and Lawgiver, which doth outdo every adverse inclination, and by main pre-eminence of affection, bear down all opposition, take the helm of the soul, and gently steer it into the river of His pleasure.

The morality of the Scripture it availeth not the world to possess, unless they will also lay their hand upon this its theology, and adopt into their breasts those various most affectionate views of the Godhead, which will create a divine loyalty within the breast, an allegiance to heaven, a fealty to the great liege Lord of the human race. While their imagination dresseth Him only, in His sovereign attributes of power and wisdom and will, creatures so weak, ignorant, and unstable as men will be rebuked far away from His confidence and love. Clouds and darkness will remain around Him, which the eye dareth not to pierce. We shall live without the sphere of His influence; into which if we were to come, while we imagine Him so sublime and terrible, we must come crouching and slavish. Therefore nature makes a stand for her own dignity, and abides aloof from a God while she knoweth Him only in such masterful moods. She is afar off—she needeth to be brought nigh. He is invisible from the radiancy that is around Him, and some one must come forth from His bosom and discover Him. Till you know of God more than this vague and mysterious idea, He will never come into favour with you, do what you may. Who loveth the sandy desert or wisheth to dwell therein, though it be the scene of many sublime commotions of the simoom wind, and hath at times the magic scenery of the mirage, and is always sublime in its

very solitude and undefined, unobstructed magnitude ? Nevertheless we hasten across it under a painful sense of loneliness and helplessness,—we dare not venture on it alone, we must equip as it were a fleet of men, to keep the heart cheerful against the invasion of gloomy thoughts. We long for some oasis, some green island in the waste, where are things commensurate with our minds, and objects upon which the affections of our nature may be renewed. So it is with nature's apprehension of God ; it is painful to dwell in, we avoid it, we skirt along its edge, we search not its profound and mysterious vastness. There is a necessity for a revelation of the face and countenance of God, in order to bring Him into the midst of human sympathies, and have Him in the embraces of the human soul. Such a revelation the Christian possesseth—and he alone doth possess it—in the person of Jesus Christ, who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person ; and who upholdeth all things by the word of His power. He hath made known to us the true character of God's grace and mercy to the sons of men, entwining Him with every affection and with every hope of human nature. He hath revealed Him as our friend, our father, our patron ; under the canopy of whose protection we walk by day, and under the wings of whose providence we rest by night ; to whom we may address our prayers in every need ; who rejoiceth in our joy and sympathises in our grief ; who would be the dwelling-place of our souls continually, the rock of our salvation, our shield, our buckler, and our strong tower. But in giving Him these tender affections to human nature, He doth not take away any of the noble attributes of His being, but clothes Him in sublimity, in sovereignty, in unsullied holiness, in terrors against impenitence, and utter consumption of His obstinate foes. The sublime and terrible remain as a barrier to iniquity, and a scorn to pride ; the gentle and affectionate and forgiving, as an encouragement to holiness and humility. "Though I am the high and holy One who inhabiteth the praises of eternity, yet I dwell also with him who is of a humble and a contrite spirit, and who trembleth at my word." But it is vain for me in the topic of a discourse to present the features of

our God, which are not only declared in words but shewn forth in the person of Jesus Christ, who is the image of the invisible God. For this revelation of God manifest in the flesh is the great means by which we are made acquainted with and enamoured of the Divine nature. The soul cannot ascend into the abstract regions of the Divinity, therefore the Divinity sent His only-begotten Son to represent Himself within our fleshly sphere. This is the ladder from heaven to earth which Jacob saw in vision ; and the angels ascending and descending thereon are the affections of the Divine mind and the affections of the human soul. And from whatever creed this article is erased, of Christ the visible Divinity, be it Unitarian, Socinian, or Arian, it will come to pass that the soul, having no means of communication, will sink back upon itself, grow cold, and maintain no close nor frequent commerce of love with the divine affections, which we see every day exemplified by the fact.

Would the world, who have adopted our morality into their sentiments, and some of it into the outward forms of life, adopt into their hearts our theology, our knowledge of the true God and of Him that He hath sent, then they would have a fund of divine loyalty and affection which would bring forth obedience as cheerfully, as anxiously, as maternal love bringeth forth infinite humble offices from a mother to her children, and as patriotism bringeth forth infinite sacrifices from citizens to their distressed country. It is the presence of God within the heart, His image renewed in the soul, that worketh obedience to His laws, which otherwise were insufferably oppressive. He is beloved, He is really beloved as a friend that sticketh closer than an earthly brother ; He is beloved, He is really beloved as a Father able and ready to help us in the time of need ; He is beloved as the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who spared not His own Son, but gave Him up to the death for us all. His forgiveness in Christ healeth the past wounds of conscience ; therefore He is beloved as a Physician who hath saved us. His promise of the Spirit strengtheneth all the misgivings of weak nature, disperseth fear, anxiety, despair, and all the torments which spring from the future. His own gracious presence keepeth

the soul in a constant frame of trust and tranquillity. And by all this communion the soul is lifted up with glory and gladness ; she treadeth, she trampleth upon the neck of ungodliness ; her feet standeth upon the earth, but her heart is in heaven. Her affections are upon the things above, she is risen with Christ, and she seeketh the things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. We are not our own, we are bought with a price ; we are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, to shew forth the praises of our God.

O ye men of this world, ye know us not ! Ye mistake us for enthusiasts, ye deride us for a sort of distempered zealots. But it is not so. We have the means of such a life. It is not difficult to us. It is not assumed. It is not ignorant. It is not blind. Possess yourselves of the same divine knowledge. Be obligated to your God, as we are obligated. Or rather know your obligations, for God hath loved you no less than us. But ye will not know, ye will not consider. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib ; but ye are a stiffnecked generation, who reject the God that made you, and lightly esteem the rock of your salvation. Oh that you would be wise ! Oh that you would know God, that you might delight in His love ! then His yoke would be easy, and His burden would be light.

Ye are now, many of you, about to retire from this noisy, dissipated place into the sweet, peaceful, and adorned retreats of nature in the silent country. Oh, forget not these admonitions ! Carry with you your Bible. Make your meals temperate, and your sleep regular ; and in the morning when you awake cheerful as the lark, pour out like the lark the joy of your soul to God. And when you walk forth among your bowers, oh, forget not God who hath enriched your noble residences ! Hold communion with your souls, and through the Scriptures hold communion with your God. Then shall your soul become untroubled as the peaceful lake which is embowered around with sheltering foliage. And in your soul, as in its bosom, shall the peaceful heavens be reflected, and ye shall come up, if God spare you, to this city, greatly refreshed by your God, and able better to contend against the contending currents of

pride, vanity, and policy, which invade it. Oh, do so ; do so for the sake of your immortal souls ! And that you may do so, seek the help and grace of the Lord God Almighty, your Father whom you have not loved, your Saviour whom you have not acknowledged, but not the less your Father and your Saviour still.

#### XIV.

##### THE BONDAGE IN EGYPT.

THE object which we have before us in this discourse is to ascertain the purpose of God in bringing His elect people under the bondage of Egypt, the mother of material arts and sciences, and of all sensual idolatry ; into which we may believe that God brought them for a blessing, in order to save that great nation and all the surrounding parts alive, in the midst of famine, whereby He introduced into the confidence of the king the most holy and devout of the chosen race, and by the power of prophecy shewed unto the king that the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob was the only living and true God. And He did likewise connect Joseph by marriage with the chief priest of Egypt, in order also to bring him into contact with the sanctuary as well as with the throne. Moreover, when Jacob and his children came into Egypt He planted them apart from the people, in the land of Goshen, and interposed between the chosen race and the Egyptians the barrier of a proscribed occupation, so that, if possible, they might not intermingle with one another. From all which it is apparent that, though the means of life was the occasion of their coming hither, there was a deeper purpose on the part of God, which, so far as it respects the Egyptians, was the same which moved Him to carry Abraham first into Egypt, then unto Abimelech, then unto the kings of the plain ; and so also Isaac—in order to bless the nations with the fellowship of the blessings with which He blessed the chosen family. And this especially unto the descendants of Ham, who were soonest tempted into the idolatry and lusts of the senses ; because God is very gracious and good unto

all, neither suffereth any to come unwarned into the snare of Satan. So far our way is plain and simple before us. His prophets were carried about and about amongst the declining and apostatising nations, in order to preach and to testify unto the name and providence of the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob ; but when we come to inquire what was the end of this dispensation as it respecteth the election themselves, we are brought unto a much more difficult question. To say that it was for their chastisement is doubtless to speak the truth. The patriarchs had grievously sinned against their own flesh and blood, against their own brother, because he was a prophet and more righteous than they. And in so far as their humiliation before his face was concerned, this account of the matter answereth well. In perfecting the picture also of the family, by introducing us to family trials, and shewing unto all generations God's providence, His retributive providence, it doth likewise answer well. Moreover, as a typical representation of Christ the Prophet being by His brethren betrayed unto death, and thereafter ascending unto the right hand of the world's Governor, and saving the world, and His brethren also, it likewise answereth well. But none of these accounts meet all the facts of the Egyptian dispensation, which extended over two hundred years of time, and had been expressly announced to Abraham at the making of the covenant. And the reason given for it to Abraham was, because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full. And, no doubt, this was the reason, as respected the nations of Canaan, that the Lord's long-suffering was contented with the overthrow of Sodom, and left that act, a monument of severity, to stand for a while in the sight of the people, if perchance it might reclaim them. But still the great facts of the Egyptian bondage remain unaccounted for. That God should permit His people to come into such gross darkness, that He should permit them to underlie such extreme oppression, that He should subject them to such enormous cruelty, that He should put forth such awful judgments upon Egypt, and finally deliver His people in such an extraordinary manner, and for the memory of it establish an ordinance, changed

indeed in form, like circumcision, but in substance abiding still, and from henceforth find it necessary to change the simple ordinance of the patriarchal worship into the bondage of a yoke heavy and grievous, which, saith the apostle, neither we nor our fathers were able to bear;—these are great questions to be resolved by one who undertaketh to give a true and full account of the purpose of God in the Egyptian bondage.

Now, as concerning this great subject, there can be no doubt but God wisheth it to be understood by us as though He had no purpose of burdening the chosen seed with that grievous law, but was minded to treat them with the grace of the promise, after the manner in which he had treated Abraham their father, and that the law was added because of transgression; not to supersede the principle of justification by faith contained in the covenant of circumcision, nor yet to obscure it, but to preserve that memory of sin which might lead men to feel its necessity, and to estimate its value. This reason for the change from the patriarchal to the national dispensation we have from the Holy Spirit, in the mouth of Paul, who expressly declareth that the law was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made,—that is, for a time, and if for a time, then at the end of that time to be removed. Now, it is the uniform order of God's procedure to reveal the occasion and call for the change before He bringeth the change to pass, in order that the righteousness and graciousness of His plans may be shewn out. Of this we might bring forward many examples. First, being minded to create man purely good, and afterwards to bring him into the state of the knowledge of good and evil, which is the fallen state, He would first shew that the creature in the estate of simple goodness could never stand with all advantage and appliances upon his side; and this He did by planting for him a paradise, subjecting the creatures under him, and creating for him a wife, to be his meet companion; which was as much as to say, Look now, and behold how incomplete the work of creation is, and do not go to blame me when I shall cause it to pass through an intermediate stage before it arrive at its perfec-

tion. Paradise, therefore, was to the fall what Egypt was to the legal yoke—the demonstration unto reason of the necessity of the change. So also after the world had been reconstituted and put into Noah's possession under covenant, (for Adam received possession of the earth without condition,) God, knowing well the end from the beginning, and being minded to alter the general for a particular covenant, in order the more exactly to express His eternal idea of election, did first permit the whole race to reveal its apostasy in the matter of Babel, and even the chosen family to fall into idolatry, as Joshua declared in the hearing of all Israel, (Josh. xxiv. 2)—“And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods.” When thus the ungodliness of the creature had been shewn out under the universal covenant of Noah, God did construct the principle of election in the covenant of circumcision;—election, I mean, as to a particular family, though common as to the members of the family;—election, I mean, as to the principle of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, contained under circumcision, as it is contained under baptism. When, however, this family prerogative, enhanced as it was continually with renewals and further openings of the promise, shewed itself to be weak and insufficient to withstand the wickedness of men, God found it necessary to defend the lineage of the promised seed with various powerful and ingenious devices, which taken together constitute the law, while taken separately they are precognitions and standing descriptions of the seed that was to come.

To the intent of revealing this wickedness and justifying this encumbrance, I believe God brought them into Egypt, where they did come to a degree of ignorance and sensuality and idolatry, which is not only manifested in their obstinate desire after, and continually reverting to it in the wilderness, but beyond all measure shewn by the conference which Moses held with Jehovah in the bush. Though God had declared Himself to be the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and commissioned him to say

that the God of their fathers had sent him unto them, Moses propounded the question unto God, "When they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?" intimating that they had addicted themselves to gods of various names, and had lost the knowledge of the one only true God, and their pride in Him as the God of their fathers. Can such grossness of sense and idolatry be conceived as that they should make a golden calf under the very mountain whereon God's fearful signs were flaming and thundering in their sight and hearing? And their provocations were such that Stephen expressly saith, "God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven." We conclude, therefore, that their residence in Egypt, defended as it was, did not prevail to prevent them from the lowest and basest idolatry of the Egyptians. And thus the end of God was served—the case was made out, to speak after the manner of men, for that change which afterwards ensued. This is our idea in the general of the descent into Egypt; and now we come to treat of the manner of their deliverance, and how much of the Divine purpose was shewn forth therein. This is a very great subject, seeing that next to the incarnation of Christ there is no event in all God's providence which is so much made use of as the exodus out of Egypt.

The first thing here to be noted is the vocation of the man Moses, by whom God was minded to accomplish this great event, over whom the Lord watched with wonderful providence from his birth, giving him favour to be reared up and treated as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Concerning this stage of his life we have little account given in the book of Exodus, but by St Paul in Heb. xi. 23–28, and by Stephen in his apology, much account is made of it indeed; St Paul thus declaring that in high faith he left the house of Pharaoh in order to suffer affliction with his brethren: "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."

These words give unto the act of Moses in going to his brethren, and taking the part of one of them, when smitten by the Egyptians, and seeking to compose their mutual quarrels, a great character of piety, condescension, and faith,—holding it an equivalent to the renunciation of Egypt's treasures for the fellowship of the hard bondage and affliction of his brethren. Now, for faith to rest itself upon at this stage of the Church was there nothing save the promise and the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and therefore we conclude, that not in any spirit of turbulence or strife, still less in the spirit of violence, (for who so meek as he?) but by the Spirit of God and in defence of the innocent, he did slay that Egyptian, to shew his countrymen that, educated though he had been in Pharaoh's court and by Pharaoh's daughter, he was a true Hebrew at his heart, and willing at any time to lay down his life for his brethren. It was done in faith, and therefore under the Spirit of God, who might slay a man by the sword of Moses in defence of an oppressed man, when by the hand of Moses He overwhelmed Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. But Stephen, in his apology, puts it beyond a doubt that this appeal unto his brethren and rejection of them was not only an act of faith, done with an eye to the recompense of reward, but an important part of the history of Moses, as a commissioned servant of God. For he placeth it the first in the roll of his charges against his countrymen, and parallel with the act of rejecting Christ. And the only other which he mentioneth is their rejection of Moses when he was on the mount with God; his argument being, that they had rejected Christ when He offered Himself to them in their bondage, as they had rejected Moses in old times, and that now that He was ascended up to God, as Moses upon the mount, they were rejecting Him again, and so accomplishing the full meaning of that whereof their fathers accomplished the type, in the Prophet who was raised up unto them like unto Moses. For though he hastily and in a few verses runneth on to the time of Solomon, yet upon the rejection of Moses and the prophets, which shewed before of the coming of the Just One, doth he rest his accusations. With this idea let any one read

Stephen's apology, and he will see how easily and beautifully it opens its meaning. I quote only these words, "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds: and when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: for he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them; but they understood not. . . . This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer, by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness forty years." And in order to lead their mind to draw the parallel, and not vex them and prejudice them by the flat declaration that Jesus, of whom they had been the betrayers and murderers, would yet come likewise to deliver them, he immediately adds, "This is that Moses which said unto the children of Israel, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me; him shall ye hear." In that first application of Moses to his countrymen, I do therefore, by the instruction of Paul and Stephen, not equivocally discern that Moses was raised to the chief estate in Pharaoh's house, and made mighty in word and deed, skilled in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and indeed haply of service unto the state of Egypt, in order that, descending from this highest point of elevation unto the fellowship of his brethren's sorest bondage, and putting his life in peril for them, and becoming truly by the laws of Egypt as good as dead, and that, too, by accusation of the brethren whom he had pitied, and for whom he had suffered the loss of all things, and was now about to be as an exile, as a man dead, out of mind, thrust away with these words, "Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?"—that, I say, by these circumstances, antecedent to his great vocation of God, he might personate with most exact resemblance that right-hand man of a higher King than Pharaoh, who did descend not only into the humiliation of fallen flesh,

but into the fellowship of the bondage of Abraham's seed,—a servant though a King, a servant in form assumed, in order that He might be King of Israel declared, whom also they did reject, saying, "We have no king but Cæsar;" since which rejection He hath hidden His face, and been a stranger unto them, wedding Himself unto the daughter of an uncircumcised man until the day of God's redeemed shall come,—not the four hundred and thirty years promised unto Abraham, but the twelve hundred and sixty promised unto Daniel, at which time the Lord will set Himself to plague Pharaoh, in order that His people may go forth, with and under the rule and guidance of that Prophet like unto Moses whom they had thrust out from them, saying, "Who made thee to be a prince and a ruler over us?"

This leads us to unfold the whole of our idea concerning the bondage of Egypt, and the deliverance from the same: that it was so wondrously and mightily done, in order, in that first bondage, and the deliverance from it, to exhibit the purpose of God by His people, which was no other than a succession of captivities unto this day; and at the same time to exhibit the certainty, and, in some respects also, the manner of their ultimate deliverance. As He had given to Abraham the principle of all personal justification, but not until He had proved his faith, by calling him out from the midst of idolatry; so now, being about to treat Israel as a nation, He will bring them out of the captivity of a powerful nation, being about to enter into a covenant for making them a nation of kings and priests—that is, the royal nation of the earth, in whom all nations were to be blessed. It would not have served the end, of involving, as in the bud, all the captivities about to be brought upon them; it would not have given ground for the covenant framed at Sinai, to make them the royal people, extreme in dignity, unless that suffering in Egypt, and bondage, and the deliverance thence, had been extreme also in their several kinds. I understand, therefore, that this transaction of God doth stand unto the Jewish people for a memorial of captivities and deliverances, which should stand them in stead until the days in which they were to see evil should have an end. And forasmuch as we Christians have

been put into the fellowship of Christ's subjection, who, as a Jew, came into the fellowship of the subjection of the Jews ; so this deliverance from Egypt seemeth to us also the great assurance of deliverance from the subjection unto power of whatever kind it be, and our advancement unto the fellowship of Christ's kingdom, when He shall come, as the Son of man, in the clouds of heaven, to receive "the kingdom, and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven." As circumcision signified the subjection of the spiritual man under the bondage of the flesh, which was afterwards expanded into the carnal ordinances of the ceremonial law, and borne wholly and completely by the Son of God in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to His cross nailed, and in His death put to death, and in His glorious resurrection for ever removed from His Church ; so I reckon that, by the bondage of Egypt, and the deliverance from the same, was set forth that other part of the Divine idea which concerneth not the bondage under flesh, but concerneth the bondage under power—the bondage which the Church, a polity, should have to endure under the polity of the state, aye and until the Prophet, rejected like unto Moses, should come from the exile of keeping His flock in the mount of God, and treat with the mighty one who then should be holding His people in bondage,—treat with him, first, by a succession of mighty judgments consuming his strength, until at length, with a high hand, and an outstretched arm, and fury poured forth, He should acquit His people from the heavy hand of power, to be under it no more, but themselves to possess the kingdom under the whole heaven, which, according to every promise of holy writ, is at one time to be given to the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.

Such is our idea with respect to the political bondage and political deliverance out of Egypt, standing at the head of the political history of the chosen nation—that it beareth the same relation to the glorious advent of Christ, as the Head of the Church, and the Ruler of the world, which circumcision or the cutting off of the flesh beareth to the incarnation and the death of Christ. To substantiate this idea, we have so many

proofs in Scripture that our difficulty is selection, and not accumulation. I shall take them in the following order:—First, What use is made of Egypt in the holy prophets? secondly, What use is made of Pharaoh? thirdly, Of Moses and Aaron and the works done by their hands? and fourthly, What is the proper import of the passover, the great invention of God, established as an ordinance in the Church, and still continuing in substance, though changed in form, and to continue till Christ shall come?

First, The Assyrian in Isaiah, which is also the Assyrian of Micah, and who standeth forth as the type, or, I should say, is the name by which the last great enemy of God's people is named, and whose destruction before Jerusalem, by the hand of the Lord, makes him quite another kind of enemy from Babylon, which was not the name of the invading, but of the imprisoning power;—this Assyrian is said (Isa. x. 24) to smite Zion with a rod, and to lift up his staff against her, after the manner of Egypt. "For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger, in their destruction. And the Lord of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him, . . . and as his rod was upon the sea, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt. And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing." If the whole context did not satisfy us that this was the removal of all burden of power and tyranny from the neck of God's people, the expression, "because of the anointing," would be sufficient to prove it, signifying because of that anointing mentioned in the 2d Psalm, of Christ to be King of Zion and Redeemer of Israel, as is set forth at large in the 61st chapter of Isaiah. But to put it beyond all doubt that it is the last captivity and deliverance which is here likened unto Egypt, we have only to read on to the end of this strain of prophecy, which terminates with the 12th chapter. I make one or two quotations—"The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. . . . And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and

with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria ; *like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt*. And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee : though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. . . . Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. . . . Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion : for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." Besides this passage, which is so explicit, I shall quote only two others to the same effect. The first is from the 23d chapter of Jeremiah, where the future deliverance of the children of Israel is illustrated in the way of contrast with their former deliverance out of Egypt, (ver. 7,) "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt ; but, The Lord liveth, which brought up the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them ; and they shall dwell in their own land." This contrast serves to shew us that the Egyptian bondage, in which God put forth such might, and not the captivity of Babylon, is the great standing solitary instance from which God wished the might of His power in behalf of His people to be measured. The third and last passage is taken from the vision of the witnesses, in the 11th chapter of the Apocalypse, where, after the witnesses are slain by infidelity, and their bodies are exposed in the street of the great city,—that is, the Papal Roman empire, now no longer Papal, because this event cometh not to pass till after the twelve hundred and sixty days of the Papacy have been accomplished,—the city "is spiritually called Babylon" no longer, but "Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." Now, seeing that the woman, or the Papacy, is expressly denominated Babylon, and hath that name engraven upon her forehead ; and another emblem, Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified, is used to denote the city of ten parts, under its last spirit of infidelity,—we have a

plain distinction taken between Egypt and Babylon, and a direct declaration of the Spirit that Egypt is the spiritual name for Christendom become infidel, when from being merely the prison of God's people, it becometh their heavy and most grievous oppressor, or, which is more exactly the character of Egypt, hindereth them from going up to possess the land. When Babylon's appointed period came to an end, the captivity should have ceased ; but a great and cruel power, under Pharaoh, riseth up in his wrath to contend against God for the persons of His people. Now, in like manner, Sodom, at the time of its judgment by fire, representeth the great city under its last head, the infidel Antichrist ; for the Papacy, we know, or the woman, is to be destroyed by the ten horns, or kingdoms of the beast, who are to eat her flesh. And herein lies the distinction between Abraham's smiting of Chedorlaomer, the conqueror of Sodom, and Abraham's witnessing Sodom burnt with fire: the former being the infidel Antichrist, smitten by the kings of the East upon the glorious holy mountain, (Dan. xi. 45 ;) the other being the destruction of the territory of the ten kingdoms itself by fire out of heaven, as is described in the 34th chapter of Isaiah. Finally, it is said, "where also our Lord was crucified." Now our Lord was crucified not by the Papacy, nor by the spirit of the Papacy, but by infidelity and the spirit of infidelity. And this allegorical representation of infidelity, as the city which crucified Christ, is introduced, as I judge, to explain how it should kill the two witnesses, which the Papacy did not kill ; as much as to say, Be not surprised at this hitherto unheard of violence in the city, for it is now come under the same spirit as Sodom, and Egypt, and Jerusalem. There can be no doubt therefore, from these premises, that infidel Egypt standeth as the type of infidelity, which shall consummate the bondage and oppose itself to the liberation of God's people, when the time of their deliverance draweth nigh.

Secondly, With respect to the use made of Pharaoh in Holy Scripture, I observe what the Lord commandeth Moses to say to him (Exod. ix. 16)—"In very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power ; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth ;" as,

indeed, we know it was by the declaration of Rahab unto the spies (Josh. ii. 10)—“We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt;” and it is further said in Exod. x. 1, 2—“The Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him: and that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son’s son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I am the Lord.” And, accordingly, in the passover, it was so appointed for ever; as it is written in Exod. xiii. 8—“Thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt.” And so I may say continually, that Scripture doth represent the whole transactions, and all the personages in it, as purposed and directed of God, to the end of shewing the sovereignty of His power over against the utmost stoutness and extreme profanation to which human nature is capable of being brought by the hardening of God. Pharaoh was a man as much set up by God as was Moses: the one as the great type of what human nature under the hardening of God, and the other the great type of what human nature under the faith of God, could undergo. And as Moses hath his similitude only in Christ that is to come, so hath Pharaoh his similitude only in the Antichrist about to come, who shall be Satan’s great instrument for resisting the return of the Jewish people unto their own land, and in his last desperate effort for counteracting the expectation of Christ’s advent in glory. And in this way, as the type of the last Antichrist, or of Satan in him embodied, and in his destruction destroyed and cast out of the earth, do I find Pharaoh spoken of in the Holy Scriptures. The key to this mystery of Pharaoh is found in Ezek. xxix. 3—“Speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers.” I call this the key, as declaring absolutely that Pharaoh is the type of the dragon so oft spoken of in the Old Testament. We have it again, in Isaiah li. 9, 10, where, when the Lord awaketh for the re-

demption of His people, that they may come with singing unto Zion, the similitude is, as always, the deliverance out of Egypt—"Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, (Egypt,) and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?" The same language is used of this the overthrow of Pharaoh, in the 74th Psalm, of which, indeed, the prophecy of Isaiah, quoted above, is only the opening,—“Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy bosom. For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters. Thou breakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.” What creature of God is meant by dragons, and leviathan with heads, I do not stay to speculate, but am satisfied to know, from these passages of Scripture, that the overwhelming of Pharaoh in the Red Sea is the visible act of God, and the only one which is connected with the mystery of the leviathan and dragon, which pervadeth the whole Old Testament scriptures, even as the mystery of iniquity to be perfected in the last times pervadeth the whole New Testament scriptures. What that mystery is, signified by the dragon and leviathan, is now the question. For I consider it to be made out, that the act done upon Pharaoh is the foreshewing of that mystery, whatever it is found to be. Now, first, Job, who I believe to be of the patriarchal age, and our standing monument of the patriarchal state of religion, saith that leviathan “beholdeth all high things, and is a king over all the children of pride,” (Job xli. 34.) To Job there was no similitude for his might but in the animal creation, by the varied brutal forces of which he endeavoureth hard to represent him, because God had raised up no Pharaoh as yet to be a personification, and to afford a similitude of his acts. But that Job knew he was to be a man, is manifest from these words which we have quoted. And if you would know what man, you may interpret the 14th chapter of Isaiah,

which, I believe, describes him under the name of the Assyrian, whom we have seen again assimilated to Pharaoh of Egypt in the 11th chapter. Further, with respect to this dragon in the waters, it is said (Isaiah xxvii. 1) that in the day that Judah shall be restored, in the day that the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth, "in that day the Lord, with his sore and great and strong sword, shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent ; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea ;" after which the vineyard of the Lord singeth and rejoiceth. Now, this dragon with his heads, this leviathan with his heads, again appeareth to us in the Apocalypse (12th chapter) clothed with the emblems of the Roman power, and there he is expressly declared to be that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole earth. He gives up his seat for twelve hundred and sixty prophetic days, or years, to the Papal beast, nor appeareth on the stage again until the 20th chapter, when the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, is bound and cast into the bottomless pit, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled. And this casting out of Satan to make way for the millennium, this destruction of all Antichristian power, which is immediately followed by the thrones of the risen saints, is what I believe to be the full accomplishment of the mystery of Pharaoh. But forasmuch as Satan acteth not in this visible world but by an invisible form, this casting of him out referred to in the Apocalypse is not a visible exertion of Christ's power and might, and therefore, though the end of the mystery, is not the very event, but the immediate consequence of the event, represented by Pharaoh's destruction ;—the event itself being that congregation of the powers of the earth, under the beast from the bottomless pit, or Antichrist, which is contained in the verses immediately preceding, who, rising up to contend against the Lamb and those that are with Him, are utterly destroyed,—the beast and the false prophet, which did miracles before Him, being cast together into the lake of fire, while the rest are slain by the sword of Him which sat upon the horse, which sword is the word proceeding from His mouth. And now, with re-

spect to this prophet who perisheth with the infidel Antichrist, we observe that Pharaoh had his magicians and sorcerers, who did enchantments and false miracles before him, and who, I doubt not, were overwhelmed along with him in the Red Sea. For the apostle, in 2 Tim. iii. 8, after describing the last time, presenteth the apostate Church under this very similitude of Pharaoh's magicians—"Now, as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." And farther, the expression "breaking the heads of leviathan," and the identifying the dragon with the old serpent, doth suggest it to my mind, that the whole mystery of delivering the Church out of bondage into liberty and power, by the destruction of all Antichristian power, and the casting out of Satan himself, is in truth nothing more than the expansion, fructification, and fulfilment of that word threatened upon the serpent, "He shall bruise thy head," which required a correspondency of language and of figure to be kept up, as we have seen, unto the end.

We are now, in the third place, to shew how the prophets speak of Moses, and of the acts done by him in the presence of Pharaoh, up to the time of Pharaoh's destruction. Let those find a resemblance who can between the acts of Jesus of Nazareth and the acts of Moses, from the time he received the commission of God to go unto Pharaoh; I frankly confess that I can find none whatever. I can see the resemblance up to that time, in his rejection and temporary exile, as I have shewn above; but in the acts which he did before Pharaoh—as a god unto Pharaoh, ("I will make thee a god unto Pharaoh,") in the infliction of ten several judgments upon Egypt—I can find no resemblance whatever in the life of Christ, who was the dutiful subject of the king who then usurped it over Israel, and would judge no one, but was merciful unto all. Christ came not to be King of kings and Lord of lords till after His incarnation. That was the Father's exaltation of Him in consequence of His humiliation of Himself. There is no propriety, therefore, but contrariwise the greatest confusion and contradiction, in comparing Jesus in the form of a servant with Moses in the form of Pharaoh's god,—Jesus tabernacling in flesh to save a guilty world, with Moses coming in the

wrath of God to bring judgments upon Egypt, and Pharaoh her king,—Jesus coming into the fellowship of His people's bondage, and, though unwillingly, the cause of His Father's wrath upon the Jewish nation, with Moses coming as a ruler and a deliverer unto the people of God from their bondage and thralldom. I know how it is possible to lose all latitude of good sense, and all distinctness of definition, in a wide sea of spiritualising, where, without any landmark, rudder, or course, the mind follows its own imaginings. But so long as men will compare visible things with invisible things, they will find that contradiction which I have stated above. But what saith the Scripture concerning these acts of Moses, and with reference to what events are they used? I answer, always with reference to the ultimate deliverance of his people, and their final restoration to their own land. I shall adduce two or three instances of that which we fearlessly assert to be universal. The first is from Isaiah lxiii. 11, 12, which is introduced with a description of the day of vengeance and the year of His redeemed ones, who, upon looking back unto His dealings with them in the valley of their humiliation, thus speak :—"Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him? that led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name?" Again, (Zech. x. 10, 11)—"I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them. And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea, and all the deeps of the river shall dry up; and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away." In Psalm lxviii, which is the triumph of the Church on account of her deliverance by Christ, written, I may say, not with words but with stupendous acts, it is said,—"The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan; I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea: that thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies,

and the tongue of thy dogs in the same." Again, (Hosea xii. 9)—"And I, that am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feasts;" which is as much as to say, that the bringing of them out of Egypt is the assurance which God granted to them that He will do the like again; and as they had dwelt in tents, so in tents shall they dwell again. And so oftentimes in this book of Hosea doth God denominate Himself "the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt." Further, I would refer to the whole of the 20th chapter of Ezekiel and the 2d chapter of Hosea. And finally, lest any one, from these instances amongst many wherein the prophets use the deliverance out of Egypt as significant of no other thing than the deliverance of the children of Israel and Church of God from the hands of all their enemies,—never, no never once, of the deliverance of the souls from the oppression of the flesh, by the death of Christ, which is the antitype of circumcision and the ceremonial law; lest, I say, from these instances any one should think that the deliverance out of Egypt is equal and on a level with that of which it is but the earthly image, I shall quote two passages where in this matter it is as much illustrated by the contrast they are placed in as it is in the other instances by their resemblance. Jer. xxxi. 31-33—"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord :) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." The other passage is from Jer. xvi. 14—"Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers."

And now, lastly, with respect to the passover, which is, as it were, twice the ever present monument of the whole event, as it were the medal struck by God, and made for ever current amongst all His people, to keep it in lively remembrance, I have to observe, that this commemorative institution which, like circumcision, hath changed its form but not its import, nor failed of its observance in the Christian Church, is, next to circumcision, by far the most important constitution of God which hath yet come under our consideration. All the other acts of power done by Moses in the face of Pharaoh and all Egypt were unavailing until that great act, which, as it hath been ever since commemorated, we may well consider as being inclusive, as it was conclusive, of this whole demonstration of God. In choosing a lamb, in whose death to commemorate this great deliverance from that stroke of power and judgment, God did foreshew that part of His purpose which contemplated Christ as the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world ; as is well authenticated by the word of the apostle, (1 Cor. v. 7)—“ For even Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us.”

Now the end of this holy ordinance was twofold : first, to commemorate the judgment of Egypt for ever, and to commemorate the salvation of God's people from the same for ever. And the children of Israel were taught thereby that they had within their houses nothing to commend them but only this blood of a lamb upon the outermost parts thereof, wherein salvation by free grace through the blood of the Lamb of God was signified. Moreover, the blood reached its saving influence only to one, and that the first-born of the house, though all the house ate of the body of the lamb ; where, again, the great and necessary accompaniment of a visible Church is taught,—to wit, that a reprobation is mixed up with the election in the eating of the passover, as in the sealing of circumcision ; whence also, I take it, the Church which shall inherit the new Jerusalem is called the Church of the first-born which are written in heaven, because from that time forth the Lord sanctified all the first-born : “ Whatsoever openeth the womb among

the children of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine." This right over the first-born of men He afterwards relinquished for the Levites, (Num. iii. 12.) Upon the cessation of which order, the Christian Church became the priesthood, according as it is said in 1 Peter ii. 9, "a royal priesthood;" and Rev. i. 6, "hath made us kings and priests." And of the Christian Church, who have no portion in the present earth, and are scattered abroad, as the Levites were in Israel, the first-born, who are preserved by the blood of Christ, are the true election of God who shall be priests unto Him for evermore. And as to the high-priesthood in the first-born of Aaron's family, it hath been summed up in our Melchisedek, the high priest of our profession, who is passed into the heavens for a while, as the high priest did within the veil, in order to sanctify the heavenly things of which all within the holy of holies was the pattern. Not to remain there for ever, for no high priest remained for ever within the veil, but, as saith the apostle when treating of this very thing, to appear the second time unto them that look for Him, without sin unto salvation. So much, then, dependeth in God's economy, and so much of the mystery of election is manifested, in this institution of the passover. But it may be said, How doth this bear upon the question in hand? and doth it not rather make against your own position, seeing Christ our Passover was sacrificed long ago, and therefore that signified in the type by the deliverance out of Egypt must long ago have come to pass? In answer to this, I pray you to consider well along with me the nature of the Christian sacrament, which consisteth in two actions, as the passover did,—the one an action of eating the body of the Lamb, "This is my body;" and the other an action of drinking His blood, "This is my blood of the new testament," or "This is the new testament in my blood." Concerning the first of these actions, I perceive it to be parallel with the eating of the flesh of the lamb, which was the nourishment and food in the strength of which the people went up on their journey. But their eating of the lamb's flesh was not a substantial part of the redemption, which was procured by the blood only. Yet was it the nourishment of the Lord's people, and so say I,

that the body of the Lord, eaten by faith in the Supper, is the nourishment of the Lord's people; and so the type and the antitype meet and close there. But the question is concerning the blood, for that was the only part of the lamb which was connected with the redemption out of Egypt. Now, no difficulty, nor perplexity, nor way of escape from the truth is permitted to us in this matter. For the Lord himself expressly saith that it is the new testament or covenant in His blood. Now, if I turn to the Holy Scriptures in order to discover to what and to what time this covenant hath respect, I find in all the prophets, and especially in Jeremiah, from which the apostle maketh his quotation, (Jer. xxxi. 31,) that it is not concluded until the time of the restoration of Israel and of Judah,—fixed to that period with the utmost definiteness of which language is capable. And again, if I examine the substance of the covenant, I do find that not one of the promises in it hath been fulfilled, saving in a first fruits and earnest of the Spirit. There is no people of whom it can be said they all know God, from the least to the greatest, nor of whom it can be said that the laws of God are in their minds and written upon their hearts. For though to the election according to grace this be in part fulfilled by the Spirit, it is not fulfilled to any people visibly and ostensibly, and therefore cannot be the accomplishment of a prophecy; for I hold it to be a canon, and the first canon of all prophetic interpretation, that a prophecy of God must have a visible accomplishment, in order to distinguish the true prophet from the false; according as it is written in the law of Moses, (Deut. xviii. 22,)—"When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken." Now I say that nothing of the new covenant hath yet visibly come to pass upon any visible people under heaven, least of all to the house of Judah and the house of Israel, unto whom and upon whom it was expressly declared by the Spirit of God in the mouth of the prophets, unto whom and upon whom it is still continued by the same Spirit in the mouth of the holy apostle. For, brethren, in that epistle to the Hebrews the apostle is writing to the Hebrews, and surely he would not insult his country-

men by calling the Gentiles the house of Israel and the house of Judah. And if that new covenant had been actually then in being, and the old covenant taken out of the way by the death of Christ on Calvary, he would not have concluded his argument with these words, "In that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now, that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away;" he would have said, "is already vanished away." But knowing well that while the temple and Jerusalem stood, and the various ordinances of the nation, the old covenant also stood, and that till these were removed out of the way, the new covenant could not come into manifestation, he saith, "Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."

When, therefore, in the Supper it is said, "This is the blood of the new covenant," or "the new covenant in my blood," it is after the manner of a pledge and seal of God, that when the day cometh for bringing in that new covenant unto the earth, we who have eaten by faith into the membership of Christ's body, shall be raised with Abraham, and with Job, and with all the saints, to the inheritance, not of the possession merely, but of the power and administration of that new covenant, which shall then be entered into in the day when God shall be espoused to Israel for ever, and they shall call Him Ishi, and call Him no more Baali: "In that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the earth: and I will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely. And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindnesses, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord." When these things are come into the world, I will say that the new covenant is come into the world; until these things be come into the world, I hold of the new covenant by faith, I live upon the promise of it, and look unto Jesus Christ as its Mediator, as its Sacrifice, as the Intercessor and High Priest of good things to come, which I shall receive in the day of His appearing. And as the pledge thereof I receive

from the hand of His Church the cup of the communion, whereby the covenant is sealed to me as it was to Abraham. But as Abraham had the seal of the covenant before he had the end and object of the covenant, which was Isaac ; and as the children of Israel had the old covenant sealed in the blood of bulls at the rock of Sinai before they had the end of it, which is the promised land ; and as every saint hath in baptism the seal of his regeneration in the body, long before he hath the reality of it manifested unto him in a holy life of faith,—so, in order that there might be room for faith, we have the seal of the new covenant, in the cup of the Lord's Supper, before we have the reality of it in the resurrection of the dead and the kingdom of the righteous ; and then shall the true meaning of the lamb's blood which saved the first-born, and the first-born only, be made manifest ; for then all who have eaten the body of Christ and partaken of the cup in a carnal and not a believing way, shall remain in their graves for judgment, or be smitten on the earth, in the day when Judah and Israel are delivered, and Pharaoh, or the dragon, cast out, and all things restored,—not according to the manner of universalists, but according to that which is written in all the holy prophets. In which times of refreshing Paul declares that the heavens shall hold Christ no longer, but God shall send Him, the Prophet like unto Moses, to bring up His people, and be the King over them for ever,—David their king, the one shepherd of the flock of God, now gathered into one.

If these views, which we have given as we have found them in Scripture, be correctly drawn and set forth, there remaineth little to be said in conclusion and recapitulation of the subject ; for the argument is one, and the conclusion is one : That the Egyptian bondage hath not yet had its completion,—that the redemption out of Egypt hath not yet begun. The children of Israel, the long lost tribes, are still in unmitigated bondage ; and the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah are still in the mystical Babylon, suffering under the dominion of the fourth Gentile monarchy. Nor will the tribes of Israel be gathered out of the north country, and out of every country in which the Lord cast them, until the Prophet like unto Moses, who, like Moses, was rejected, shall, like Moses, be

sent again to require of Pharaoh, whosoever he may be, to let the people go ; and, in despite of all opposition, shall lead His people forth at once, the stone, and the shepherd of Israel, as it is written in the prophet Micah (chap. ii. 12, 13)—“I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee ; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel ; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold : they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. The breaker is come up before them [that is, the breaker of the bond and the house of their imprisonment :] they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it ; and their king shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them.” Then shall He come, with the outcasts of Israel, to deliver the dispersed of Judah from Babylon, as Cyrus did of old. And then shall He, with His united tribes, break the power of Antichrist, who opposeth them in their going forth. And various other mysteries, both of suffering and of power, concerning which this is not the place to inquire, shall He accomplish in that day in which He refineth His people in Jerusalem, and purgeth out from amongst them the sorceress and all that do iniquity. After which the throne of David shall be established, and He shall sit upon it for ever ; after which the chosen nation shall possess the bounds of the land, as God covenanted unto Abraham, from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates. And it shall be known, not by Pharaoh only, but by the whole earth, that God is the Lord, when He hath magnified Himself over all His enemies, and set His Anointed upon the holy hill of Zion, and given Him the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. For which day of the glory of God, and of His Christ, when His Church shall sing of mercy and of faithfulness, I do devoutly pray, looking earnestly, and hasting unto, the glorious coming of the Lord. Amen, and amen.

## XV.

### THE KINGDOM OF DAVID AND SOLOMON.

**T**HAT the purpose of God by the chosen nation was that they should abide under the government of judges and not have a king to judge them, like all the nations, is manifest, from the express declaration of God himself, which He spake unto Samuel, when the children of Israel chid with him that He would give them a king (1 Sam. viii. 7, 9)—“And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. . . . Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.” Whereupon the prophet rehearsed unto them the evils which this change would entail upon them and upon their children; but they regarded him not, saying, “Nay; but we will have a king to rule over us.” Nevertheless, this change, like every other, was silently accomplishing God’s purpose of bringing into types the kingly person and office of Jesus Christ in the age to come, whereof there was no example as yet, save in the person of Melchizedek, who is exhibited to us rather as a priest over the king, than as a king over the priest. And seeing the priesthood had now been separated and shewn forth with great distinctness in the Levitical economy, it was necessary that the kinghood should also be held up to conspicuous observation, which was accomplished in the persons of David and Solomon. For that the kingdom was a constitution of God, no less than the law, we have the express declaration of Holy Scripture (1 Sam. x. 25)—“Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it

up before the Lord." And that it is the kingly person who doth typify the kingly office of Christ, is manifest from the several declarations of Scripture, that when the tribes of Israel and Judah are gathered and united together, "David my servant shall be king over them. . . . And my servant David shall be their prince for ever," (Ezek. xxxvii. 24, 25;) and "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days" (Hosea iii. 5.) But by nothing is this so clearly attested as by the angel in the annunciation of Jesus unto the blessed Virgin,—“And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke i. 32, 33;) and by the words of the apostle James, in the council of Jerusalem—“After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up” (Acts xv. 16.) From which words last quoted, the idea conveyed by the prophets and apostles concerning the tabernacle and throne of David is, that it is lying in ruins still, until the time shall come for setting it up, that the Son of David may sit upon it for ever. And when the Son of David removed for a season, till the indignation against the holy people should be consummated, Peter did, on the day of Pentecost, take that text of the 132d Psalm—“Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne”—to shew unto them that Christ would come again, to abide with them for ever; and had, in the meantime, by His resurrection and ascension into heaven, fulfilled two other prophecies of David, contained in Psalms xvi. and cx., to which the Jews, in their haste after the kingdom, had not sufficiently adverted.

Being, therefore, by these texts, assured that David's kingdom is as much the foreshewing of Christ's kingdom, as Levi's priesthood is of Christ's priesthood, I now proceed, by the principles of sound interpretation, and especially by the light of Scripture itself, to shew at length what insight into the divine purpose in the Christ we can derive from this new constitution of God. The first question which meets us in this inquiry is, To what served the kingdom of Saul? My answer is, It served,

first of all, to shew the people that God had given them a king in His wrath, who, laying upon them those burdens which Samuel had threatened, and being a turbulent, tyrannical prince, did shew unto them, or did give them a brief foretaste of that long tyranny of kings which they should have to undergo. Saul is an anointed king, a king anointed in the name and by the prophet of the Lord, and, therefore, represents quite another form of power than that represented in Pharaoh, who, we found, did personate the infidel Antichrist, who shall not regard the God of his fathers, nor any God. Now, excepting Solomon, we may say that there was no king ever anointed over the whole tribes of Israel—Jeroboam, and those dynasties that followed, being only usurpers of the Lord's heritage. Nor were the kings of the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, or Roman dynasties, which successively oppressed the Church of God, anointed in the name and by the prophets of the Lord of hosts, until we come to the time of Constantine, when the fourth empire became Christian, and the emperors and the kings in the several kingdoms of the west where the Church hath abidden, began and continued to be crowned and anointed by the prophet of the Lord, until Napoleon, in the presence of the Pope, with his own hand took his own crown and placed it upon his own head. Considering, therefore, the kingdom of Saul, which preceded and joined on to the kingdom of David, in the light of an exposition of the divine purpose, it doth intimate that from the time of God's resolve to give His people a king, until the time of His giving them the king of His own heart, He would be pleased to set over them an intermediate dispensation of kingdom, under which they should grieve and groan. Now, I consider the resolve of God to give His people a king was declared by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, who then became both Christ and Lord; that is, the declaring of the decree mentioned in the 2d Psalm, as Paul himself saith in his discourse upon this very subject—"God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" (Acts xiii. 33.) By the resurrection, therefore, I hold Christ to have been pro-

claimed king ; even as David was, early in the reign of Saul. But that as David was hidden in the wilderness from the wrath of Saul, until Saul should be taken out of the way ; so hath Christ, the head of the kingdom, been removed out of the way, and His people, the sharers of the same, and Himself, in them His members, have been driven into the wilderness by the powers of Christendom, which, for the present, possess the supremacy.

If any one ask of us a Scripture ground for this interpretation, I can answer, in the first place, that though our David hath been declared to be both Christ and Lord by the resurrection, and His people, by the washing of baptism, been separated to be kings and priests along with Him, it doth fall, of course, to be inquired, how is the kingdom occupied in the meantime ? to which an answer is necessary to be given, in order to make the type of David good for anything ; and the only answer that can be given is, that it hath been occupied by the anointed kings of Christendom. I observe, in the second place, that in that series of psalms, from the 51st unto the 60th, which relate unto the events of David's life, between the time of his anointing and the time of his installation, his sufferings are applied unto the sufferings of his people under oppressive power, and the final deliverance of them from the same into the inheritance of the power and the kingdom for ever ; and that not the power of a professed enemy, but of a professed friend. And indeed I may observe in general, upon all the Psalms of David which grow out of incidents in his life, that they are invariably applied by the Holy Ghost unto Christ, and unto Christ's people in their kingly character, suffering at present the deprivation of their rights, and the oppression of all wickedness. I would refer in particular to the 57th Psalm, indited when he fled from Saul in the cave, and concluding thus : " Awake up, my glory ; awake, psaltery and harp : I myself will awake early " (in the morning—that is, according to the best interpreters, the morning of the resurrection.) " I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people ; I will sing unto thee among the nations " (ver. 8, 9.) The same is set forth in the 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th verses of the 59th Psalm, indited upon a similar occasion. So also the 63d

Psalm, where the sufferer suffereth 'as a king, exiled from his throne, and his confidence expresseth itself thus : "The king shall rejoice in God ; every one that sweareth by him shall glory : but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped" (ver. 11.) David, therefore, by the Spirit of God, did interpret his exile and sufferings in the wilderness as endured in the person of Christ, speaking of himself not as a type, but speaking of Christ as suffering in him. Now what deprivation of His kingdom hath Christ suffered, if it be not in the season between His resurrection and His second coming ? And how otherwise can He be said to suffer who is now in glory, than as He suffereth in us, His members, who, by baptism, are risen with Him, and do sit with Him in heavenly places ? And how otherwise can we use these Psalms of David than as those who have been anointed to a kingdom, from which we are prevented for a while, not by the usurpation of another, but by the will of God, that another should be anointed to hold it for a season, until Christ, our David, shall come, and all His saints with Him ? This is our idea of the kingdom of Saul, and an idea it is most needful to be revealed, and which, rightly apprehended, will preserve the Church from the false spirit of the fifth-monarchy men, and of the Cameronians or relics of the old Covenanters, who would not pray for an uncovenanted king. Had the Church not received in Saul the notice and information of God's purpose to put in by holy unction one who should drive David and David's followers to the deserts and dens of the earth, they would either have concluded that power in general, but especially power held on Christian tenure, when exerted against Christ, ought, in our allegiance to Christ, not to be obeyed,—which conclusion our Covenanters fell into, and some of our Reformers a little verged upon,—or else they would have concluded that the kingly office of Christ was purely invisible, and that the visible power was a necessary evil, under which the Church would have to groan so long as things visible endure ; which is the conclusion into which all men and all churches have now come, insomuch that, instead of any longer looking upon power as an anointed thing which is answerable unto God, they consider it as a merely human expedient, a compact, as

they call it, which is answerable to the people. But God, in order that the wise might understand, did set up Saul, anointed both with oil and gifted with a good spirit from the Lord, and during his lifetime did anoint David, the great type of the kingly Church, in exile and dispossession, who yet had oft the life of the Lord's anointed in his hand, but would not meddle with it by any entreaty, or for any advantage. The Lord's anointed must fall by the hands of the Philistines or infidels, and not by the hand of the Lord. We may flee into the wilderness, and seek our meat from God; we may even profane the holy meat and be blameless; but we may not lift our hand against the Lord's anointed.

Such is our idea of Saul's kingdom, and in support of the idea we shall see every event which fell out between Saul and David will present itself. First, observe, for what Saul's kingdom was brought to an end—because he did not fulfil the word of the Lord, spoken by the mouth of Moses against Amalek—"Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua; for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi: for he said, Because the Lord hath sworn, that the Lord," or, as it is in the margin, "because the hand of Amalek is against the throne of the Lord, therefore will the Lord have war with Amalek from generation to generation" (Exod. xvii. 14-16.) This oracle of God, which was given before the law, and, I think, intendeth the object for which He was separating a people,—to wit, that they might make war upon, and root out idolatry, whose hand is upon the throne of the Lord,—this oracle lay by unaccomplished until God had set up a king, who might take upon him this battle for the throne of God, which idolatry doth profane. Saul, then, being commissioned to execute this oracle, fell short through avarice, disguised under the pretence of piety. And the kingdom was rent from him and his children for ever. And in like manner, when God anointed Christian emperors, Constantine and Theodosius, it was that they might destroy the idolatries of ancient Rome, which failing utterly to do, and preserving no small relic of it in that

avaricious priesthood, which they established in the face of Christ our prophet's word to the contrary, God will cut it off by the hand of infidelity about to arise, as is expressly declared in the 7th chapter of Daniel, that the fourth beast is destroyed because of the words which the little horn spake. And when Saul the mighty, and Jonathan the beloved, for whom also we might find a fit emblem in the lovely and most Christian constitution of these realms, shall have fallen together at the hand of the uncircumcised Philistines, the unbelieving infidels, who are rising up, like the teeth that Cadmus sowed in the earth; (for these men are truly the fruit of the serpent-tongue, which uttereth the serpent-words of the unsanctified intellect of man;) then shall Rome be made fit for the actions of our David in their destruction, previous to His installation in His kingdom, and everlasting inheritance of all things.

This brings us to the acts of David himself, and the purpose of God revealed thereby with respect to our King, which I shall not hesitate to interpret after a typical sort, seeing they are so used by the Holy Spirit in the Psalms. David, then, I consider in his wanderings to represent Christ's Church, or Christ mystical, from the time of the resurrection until the time of the second advent. The choice of him by Samuel the prophet, proceeded upon the principle of free grace, choosing not by human worth, but by the will of God. His first act with his stone and sling against Goliath of Gath, the champion of the uncircumcised, is the same mystery which is recorded in the 12th of the Apocalypse, of the man-child, or the complement of the first martyrs who overcame the dragon-head of the Roman pagan empire, which was the champion of the unbaptized infidel against the Church. The acts of David, to charm away the evil spirit of Saul, which began to trouble him from the time of his unfaithfulness in the matter of Amalek, doth signify the lenient influence of the Church upon the character of power, from the time that Constantine became a Christian prince, until the time that the emperor, by giving power unto the Pope, did cast out the body of Christ, and force her to flee into the wilderness. David, long haunting of the wilderness of Judah, and his loathness to take refuge amongst the uncircumcised, until at length

he was forced to preserve his life, doth denote the lingering, the long lingering of the Church within the seat of the ten Christian kingdoms, and her loathness to seek her shelter amongst the other kingdoms of the north, where at length, however, she found in Luther her ablest advocate, and in Gustavus, the Swede, her mightiest champion; which both belong unto states that were late in receiving the gospel, and neither of them to that portion of Christendom in which the types and symbols of the Old Testament find their application in the Apocalypse. Still, however, David had in Saul's house both a loving wife and a loving brother: a wife who, for love of him, consented both to offend and to deceive her fitful father; a brother who loved David better than his own life,—signifying that Christ had a true Church in the midst of Christendom, in the house of Saul, and likewise a powerful and attached descendant of that anointed one, who holdeth the power till Christ come, of which I have already given my interpretation. But when Jonathan and Saul have fallen, much mourned over, because they were the Lord's anointed, David himself smote the Amalekite who had lifted up his hand against Saul.

In which the manner of Saul's death, I see this worthy of remark,—that though the Philistines overcame him, by the sword of an Amalekite he died, whose nation he was commanded to root out; to signify, as seemeth to me, that the idolatry spared in the Papacy shall be the death-blow of Christian power, though infidelity be a host which overwhelms its armies, and that our David shall slay the idolatry as well as overcome the infidelity of the earth. Upon this David is crowned over Judah in Hebron, but not yet over Israel; nor do I think that he becomes the type of Christ the King until he is crowned over Israel also, because it is only as king of the united tribes that Christ is presented to us under the name of David. Nor was it till after they anointed David king over Israel that he possessed and reigned over all Israel and Judah in Jerusalem. For though the children of Israel in the time of Joshua had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and had smitten it, (Judg. i. 8,) we find it (Judg. xix. 10) again in the hands of the Jebusites, under whom it continued until the

time that Israel and Judah received one king, even David; but forthwith upon the instant of the manifestation of God's king, his first act is to go up and take Jerusalem out of the hands of the Jebusites, and there to plant his throne for ever. Now, any one who will consider this may and ought to ponder a little before he rejects the emblematical end of the life of David. Why was David not moved during the seven years he reigned in Hebron to go up and take Jerusalem? why was Jerusalem, after being possessed by Judah, suffered for 400 years to remain in the hands of the uncircumcised Jebusites? and why should David, upon the instant of his being anointed king over Israel, go up to Jerusalem and take it; and having taken it, at once translate the seat of his kingdom thereto? These things do not look like accidents. They are no doubt integrant parts of the Divine purpose in the raising up of David, to signify that until Saul—that is, anointed Christian Amalek-sparing power—shall have been taken out of the way, Jerusalem shall remain in the hands of the unbaptized: but from the time of the downfall of anointed Christian powers by the Philistines or infidels, it shall begin to expect, and receive, and prepare for the true David, who shall establish His throne and His kingdom therein for ever.

Now, the next event of David's life, the first of David's reign in Jerusalem, is the destruction of the Philistines or infidels, who had overthrown Saul and Jonathan, and brought to an end the dynasty which stood between David and the throne. It took place in the valley of Rephaim, or the Giants, concerning which there is much room for learned speculation, if the time permitted. As in the valley of Jezreel the bow of Israel was broken, and in the valley of Jezreel the bow of Israel shall be bent against all the enemies of the Lord; so in the valley of Rephaim (Isaiah xvii. 5) is the harvest of God's vengeance and the vintage of His wrath poured out upon Israel; and there also shall it, by our David, be poured out upon the enemies of Israel. For it is expressly declared, (Isaiah xxviii. 21,) that "the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, that he may do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act;" which is likened, in ver. 2, to a flood of mighty waters overflowing—language taken from this

first exploit of David after he became king of Jerusalem, where God broke forth upon His enemies, as the breach of waters, whence the place was called Baal-perazim ; and it is added, "there they left their images, and David and his men burned them." But a second time into this valley of Rephaim came the Philistines up, and then God gave to David the sign from the mulberry trees, which is the valley of Baca mentioned in the 84th Psalm, and regarded by the best commentators as a valley embarrassed with bushes and thorns, which could not be passed without labour and tears,—the word for mulberry tree being derived from a word to distil as tears ; denoting, as I understand, that this second coming up of the Philistines against Jerusalem, shall be with great affliction and lowliness of the Church, in which lowliness they shall receive the sign of the destruction of their last enemies. These two attempts upon David when reigning in Jerusalem, I regard as accomplished upon the Jewish Church, which I call the regal Church, because they, and they only, will be found maintaining the witness of Christ as King, in that day when professing Christendom shall have renounced that point of faith which this kingdom is now in the act of renouncing, which the Papists have long given to another. In this universal reign of liberality, which, applied to government, is the state wholly separated from the Church, the dissolution of that allegiance unto Christ which the Papacy never attempted, though it substituted a priest between the Prince and the King of kings,—when this high treason against our King Jesus shall have been accomplished by Protestant Britain of her own free will, as the great work of liberality, her pretence to a higher purity than our Reformers ever dreamt of—the purity of a Church which teacheth no lessons and fulfilleth no offices to the state, and benefiteth law and polity not a jot ; the freedom of a state which knows no Christ, and honours no God, but with equal impartiality entreateth, honoureth, and advanceth infidels, Mohammedans, Papists, and men of every name ;—when thus Protestant Britain shall die by her own hand, *felo-de-se*, and the infidel power shall, by his strong hand, have destroyed the equivocal testimony of the Papacy, then shall God, for the name of Christ the King, bring up His nation of

kings; and of them shall first bring up Joseph, the right-hand man of the King, with whom, as His battle-axe, having opened the two-leaved doors of Babylon, and delivered Judah and Benjamin, those royal tribes shall seek unto Jerusalem, and keep their royal testimony there against the usurpers of the earth. First against Antichrist the head of Christendom, who shall come up, and plant the tabernacle of his palaces upon the holy mountain, but shall thus come to his end, with his ten kingdoms; and God shall do upon the apostate Church His strange work, as in Mount Perazim he did upon the Philistines, which is set forth in the 28th chapter of Isaiah, which may be considered as the exposition of that first invasion of the Philistines, applied first unto the ten tribes of Israel, but in language which will apply only to the ten kings of apostate Christendom. And the second assault of the Philistines is the invasion of Gog and Magog, with the remnants of the first three beasts of Daniel, which come up against Jerusalem, being, as I conceive, the powers of the world, confederated under the Greek Church, now also contending against God's royal people, who being then brought into great straits, and in the humiliation of the valley of Baca, or mulberry trees, they receive the deliverance, the last and final deliverance, which is set forth in the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel. Yet up to this time I do not consider the Lord to be in person present with His people, though doubtless giving them tokens manifold of His power. He hath not yet come in the clouds of heaven, that is, in His glory, but hath been serving the Father in that act of judgment upon the four beasts which prepared the way for His coming, seeing He is to sit on God's right hand till all His enemies be made His footstool. Now, this also is signified in the emblem by the ark not being yet present in Jerusalem, but still abiding at Gibeah, and by the temple not being yet built, and by Solomon, the prince of peace, not being yet born. David, therefore, as he was the type of Christ suffering in His person and in His members during the life of Saul, so now is he the type of Christ in His Church triumphant, warring with success against the enemies of Israel. This will more clearly appear as we proceed.

The next act of King David was to take measures for bringing up the ark unto Jerusalem, which, since the days of Samuel, had been at Gibeah; and in his first attempt he failed through fear, and the ark rested in the house of Obed-edom, which, being interpreted, is the servant of Edom, a Gittite, and not one of the circumcision, where it abode for three months, and blessed his house with its presence. Which seemeth to me to signify that the ark of the Lord, the symbol of His presence, would rest with some people before it passed to Jerusalem; which also I am inclined to interpret of God's remarkable providence to this nation, which hath been a true Church nation for nearly three hundred years, keeping the testimony of God against the apostate nations. However this may be, David went down the second time, and brought up the ark unto Jerusalem, dancing before it with all his might. On which occasion Saul's daughter, Michal, took offence, and spoke slightly of her lord the king, who for her puritanism cursed her with barrenness from thenceforward, which is parallel with Leah's ceasing to bear, and doth give shrewd warning to the wise upon what rock the Gentile Church will split—upon the rock of pharisaical puritanism, and especially by taking great offence at the joy, and mirth, and dancing with which the prospect of Jerusalem again possessing the presence of the Lord will be hailed by the true and enlightened servants of the Lord. A symptom which the old stock of the Gentile Church is now putting on towards us, her late sprung shoots, who speak joyfully, and hold up our heads with rejoicing because our redemption draweth nigh. Michal, the daughter of Saul, once so true to David, is now by David rejected, and not honoured to bring forth Solomon, the prince of peace.

And now we come to the most remarkable event of David's life, which is the announcement unto him of his son Solomon, which was given him by the hand of Nathan at the time when the king, having obtained rest from all his enemies round about, did meditate to build a house unto the name of the Lord of hosts, wherein the ark of the Lord might dwell. But Nathan brought him a message from the

Lord, to the effect that the man of war should not build the temple of the Lord, but his son of peace ; which gives us the key to the contrast of David and Solomon—that the former representeth Christ acting by His Church the judgment of the nations ; the latter, Christ building the temple in times of peace, and ruling over the nations with a rod of righteousness. But this announcement of Christ, under the figure of David's son Solomon, is so important an oracle of God and so constantly referred to in the Scriptures, especially in the Psalms, which speak of him as the king's son, (Ps. lxxii. 1,) as the son of David, (Ps. lxxxix.)—which again is the ground of Paul's reasoning in the 1st of the Hebrews, "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son,"—and as the seed of David, (Ps. cxxxii,) which again is made the ground of the apostle's argument in the 2d of the Acts ;—on all these accounts, I say, this oracle of the birth of Solomon is worthy of particular consideration, as a great addition to our insight into the end of God's purpose in the Christ. Nathan having recounted God's manifold mercy unto the king, thus continueth—"Moreover, I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more ; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime. . . . And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name : and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men : but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee : thy throne shall be established for ever," (2 Sam. vii. 10, 12-16.) Now, with respect to this oracle I observe, 1st, That Solomon is to establish the kingdom ; 2d, That Solomon is to build a house for the Lord's name ; 3d, That Solomon is to be the son of God ; 4th, That Solomon, though chastened, is never to lose the mercy of God ; and lastly,

That in him the throne of David is to be established for ever. In all these particulars a Greater than Solomon is here spoken of, because these words are, as hath been said, used over and over again by the Holy Ghost, in the mouth of the prophets, and in the mouth of the apostles, as containing in them great heads of doctrine concerning Christ. We cannot, therefore, fail to conclude that Solomon is expressly promised and given of God, to be a representation of His own Son, containing new matter which was not contained in the representations formerly given. And what is this new matter? First and chief of all, that Messiah is to be the Son of God,—a point of promise not yet, as I think, stated plainly out, though certainly implied, in the former prophecies and constitutions of God. That David viewed it as a great vouchsafement of Divine favour is manifest from the 89th Psalm, where it is written, "He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth," (ver. 26, 27.) This is the pre-eminence of Messiah to be the Son of God, upon which Paul reasoneth out His superiority unto the angels. This is the oracle which the Jews treasured in their hearts, making it the highest blasphemy for any man to call himself the Son of God, preserving that inalienable and infeasible title for their Messiah, the Son of David. Being so, therefore, that this Solomon is the great type of Christ as the Son of God, we may look a little more narrowly into the circumstances of his birth. He was not born of Michal, the daughter of Saul, (that is, not of the Gentile Church,) the wife of David, from his destruction of Goliath until she mocked and derided him for bringing up the ark, when she was stricken with barrenness, and not permitted to conceive Solomon, the personification of the Son of God, whose mother was Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, and was an adulteress before she became the mother of Solomon. After being an adulteress David espoused her, and she became the mother of Solomon, which doth signify that the Jewish Church, now an adulteress, and under punishment for her adultery, yet not divorced, shall become the mother of the true Solomon, the Son of God;—that when the Gentile

Church hath fallen from her faith in Christ the Son of God, the Jewish Church shall take up the testimony, and of her hope and of her prayers shall He be the fruit. Then Christ—who at His resurrection and by His resurrection was declared to be the Son of God with power, but hath been hidden since from the sight of mortals, admitting in the meantime and gathering out of all nations God's elect children, and sealing them unto the adoption of sons—shall be revealed in His majesty and glory the manifest Son of God, in that day which is expressly denominated "the manifestation of the sons of God," which also is called the day of our adoption, "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

The thing of next importance in this oracle of God concerning Solomon is the establishment of the throne and kingdom of David in his person for ever; by which the throne of David over Israel and Judah is as truly appointed unto the Son of God as the bruising of Satan's head is to the woman's seed. And instead of being foregone by the future words of God, it is only the more clearly and explicitly declared unto the end. As in the prophecy of the virgin's Son, "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever," (Isa. ix. 7;) which is promised over again unto the Virgin, (Luke i. 32, 33.) Also in the prophecy of Moab, (Isa. xvi. 5,) which is repeated, and stated, and received as the end of controversy in the council of Jerusalem, (Acts xv. 16.) And in the prophecy of the valley of vision: "The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder," (Isa. xxii. 22;) which again Christ assumeth unto himself, (Rev. iii. 7.) And I may say that this promise of His inheriting the throne of David and establishing it for ever is a constant testimony of Holy Scripture. How unwisely, then, do they talk who say that the throne of David is the throne of God, seeing it is said to be cast down for a season, and after a season reared up again! and how widely of the mark do they talk who say that the throne of David is the Christian

Church, which hath no throne at present, but is in subjection unto the powers that be! Taking the words of God to mean what they say, we believe that when Christ shall come in His kingdom He will be known and acknowledged to be King of Israel, by special honour done unto them, as well as King of all the earth; which is a revelation not yet distinctly made, although contained in the bud of all the former constitutions of God. But as the king of Israel, Solomon is the standing memorial and prefiguration of the Son of God given unto the Church; and concerning his acts in the kingdom, Psalm lxxii. is one of the best expositions. Now let us observe the circumstances attendant upon Solomon's coming to the throne. The chief captain of David, which is Joab, the son of Zeruiah, and one of the priests, Abiathar, would have set up Adonijah, unto whom drew all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants. Here was a great attempt to hinder the succession of Solomon, just upon the eve of his succession, for David died almost immediately thereafter. This confederacy against the true prince of peace was defeated by Nathan the prophet, who taught Bathsheba to go in unto David and remind him of his oath concerning Solomon's succession; by whose prompt warrant Solomon was instantly proclaimed by the voice of the trumpet and the acclamations of the people, whose shouts reached the ears of Adonijah's confederacy as they were engaged in the midst of their festivities, whereupon Adonijah took refuge at the horns of the altar, which yet did not avail to save his life. This confederacy, thus promptly defeated, is not without its moral to one whose eye is accustomed to peruse the prophetic word of God; which I take to be this, that when the time draweth nigh for the revelation of our King Solomon, as now it doth, there shall be an unwillingness to receive Him, and an inclination to substitute another in His stead,—a state of feeling this of which I can perceive the beginnings already, in that hostility which men have to hear of Christ's kingdom, and their endeavour to set up in its stead a millennium or kingdom of their own vain imagining. But this attempt of David's sons born unto him in the days of the power of Saul, shall be

defeated by the voice of prophecy prevailing upon the Jewish Church to stand by the rights of the true Solomon, who was not born until Saul's dominion had come to an end. This, also, I trust we see the beginnings of in that blast of the prophetic trumpet which is now blown against the idol Adonijah in behalf of Solomon the son of Bathsheba ; that is, in behalf of Christ, the fruit, not of the self-sufficient pharisaical puritan Michal, or Gentile Church, but of the woman that was an adulteress, but is yet to be married unto God in a covenant of everlasting love.

It remaineth that we speak further of two other acts of Solomon—which are his marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh and his building of the temple,—and of the nature of his kingdom. I am ashamed to say that I have not such understanding in the Song of Solomon as our fathers had ; but I do fully believe that under the figure of a marriage it doth contain the whole mystery of the union of Christ to the Jewish Church in the time that is to come. Whether or not it hath its occasion in his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter I do not pretend nicely to inquire, deeming it to be of little importance to the subject matter of the book ; for though the Holy Spirit generally taketh an occasion which may be congenial to the lesson which He intendeth to teach the Church, yet is not that a rule invariable, as we see both by multitudes of the psalms and of the prophecies, especially the latter half of the books of Isaiah and Zechariah. And it is manifest to me that the 45th Psalm, which in its style is most like to the Song of Solomon, hath no occasion whatever, but is a pure mystery concerning Christ and His Church, His elect risen Church in glory, as well as His royal Church of the Jews in the flesh, the one of these being but the symbol and servant of the other.

As has been said above, the idea of building the temple was given unto King David, and the Lord approved the purpose which he had conceived ; and thereto, I may say, tended the whole of his reign,—his rest round about, his gathering of the materials, and all his preparations for the work ; but to Solomon was permitted the honour and privilege of building a house unto the name of the Lord. The

language which Solomon wrote on this occasion unto Hiram the king of Tyre is very remarkable: "Thou knowest how that David my father could not build an house unto the name of the Lord his God, for the wars which were about him on every side, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet. But now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent. And, behold, I purpose to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name," (1 Kings v. 3.) Even so also our David, who is seated at the right hand of God, shall come and be revealed as the man of war; that is, God, by His mighty power and fury poured out, shall put all His enemies under His feet, and then He shall build the temple of the Lord; for that Solomon builded *not* that temple is abundantly manifest from the words of the promise,—“He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.” And it is still more manifest that neither did Joshua and Zerubbabel build that temple, because it is prophesied by Zechariah,—“Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is THE BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both,” (chap. vi. 12, 13.) It cannot be doubted, therefore, that the temple of Solomon, as well as the second temple, are but types of that temple which shall be built for Christ in the age to come, whereof I think we have the plan and measurements given to us by the prophet Ezekiel. For as King there must be a throne of David to sit upon, as is declared in all the Scriptures, and a tabernacle or house of David of which He may be the Master or great Householder, as is prophesied of Him by Isaiah: “I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand; and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of

Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder: so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open," (chap. xxii. 21.) Even so as a Priest He shall have a temple to represent the dwelling-place of His holiness, and to give unto Mount Zion its proper glory as the chosen mountain of the Lord. I willingly allow that this throne, and tabernacle, and temple of our Solomon, Prince of wisdom and of peace, will be only as it were for emblems of royalty and priesthood still—in which, indeed, the glorious person of Christ will manifest itself when so it pleaseth Him, according to the manner of His pleasure; but for the continuance and abode of His holy presence, I believe that it will be found in the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven with all the bodies of the glorified saints.

It may seem derogatory from the glory of the Son of God that He should shew himself in a house built with hands; to which all that I can reply is, I find it so written, and therefore I will believe it. And it is nothing so derogatory as that the Son of God should have been born in a stable, and laid in a manger, and crucified on a tree. To the act of His coming into the temple I believe the whole action of Solomon's dedication hath reference, into which I cannot here enter particularly; and I believe, moreover, that the tabernacle of Moses is the shadow of the Church that now is, and the temple of the Church as it is to be in the kingdom. Now, between these two the great difference consisted in the outward court of the Gentiles, which was not a part of the tabernacle; signifying, as I conceive, that the difference between Jew and Gentile, which is now broken down under the dispensation of election, shall be restored again, not for difference but for distinction, in order that Abraham's seed may inherit Abraham's blessing for Christ's sake, and become the conveyancers of the blessing unto all nations, and in order that the covenant made with Moses that they should become a kingdom of priests may be accomplished. So that, as hath been said, the new Jerusalem come down out of heaven shall be the holy of holies, the Jewish nation the holy place, and the Gen-

tiles the court without. While this I believe to be the mystery of the temple of Solomon, I do likewise believe that there will be a real temple, a real throne, and a real tabernacle of David, of which Christ will be the only acknowledged rightful possessor, whatever deputies, servants, and administrators He may have under Him.

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## XVI.

### GOD OUR FATHER.

EPH. I. 2.

*From God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**I**T is a thing to be remarked with much observation, that in every one of our apostle's epistles, except that to the Hebrews, his opening benediction is expressed in exactly the same form of words; with the addition merely of the word "mercy" in those to Timothy and Titus,—the substance of the blessing being alway "grace and peace;" the origin of it, "God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." And that it was no form understood and agreed upon among the apostles of the Lord, is manifest from the various styles in which the other inspired penmen of the New Testament have expressed the burden of their good wishes unto the churches to which they wrote: so that we are forced to consider it as one of those very weighty forms of speech and most pregnant forms of blessing, which within the shortest compass contains the largest and most precious burden of truth; and, if so, which should by us be the more highly prized and the more diligently studied. It must be a very complete and comprehensive word, that it should have wrought itself into constant use with a soul so rich in well-wishing, and so varied in expression, as the apostle Paul's: and however you may feel, to me it feels as if I had presented to me the most concentrated essence of the gospel, which it is my part to open and diffuse its fragrance over the souls of this Christian people. Therefore do I now intend to dilate upon the heavenly fountains from which "grace and peace" flow into the Church. These are—

First, From God our Father ; and—

Secondly, From our Lord Jesus Christ.

And, in general, before proceeding to the particular consideration of each of these Divine Persons, I observe that the reason why only two of the persons of the Blessed Trinity, in whose name the Christian Church is baptized, are here mentioned, is to be found in that word of our blessed Lord which He spake unto His disciples concerning the Holy Ghost. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." As it was proper in the Messiah to testify not of Himself, but of the Father which sent Him—wherefore He saith, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true," (John v. 31)—so was it proper in the Comforter not to speak of Himself, but to glorify Christ, to take of Christ's and shew it unto His Church. And, moreover, as Christ had John the Baptist sent before Him to bear witness of Him, as He saith, "There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness of the truth;" even so had the Holy Ghost his witness sent before, in the person of Messiah himself, whose last discourse unto His disciples may be considered as the witness to that other Comforter which was to come; whose last act before His ascension was the partial gift of Him into His disciples' hearts; whose first act after His ascension into power and glory, was the full procession of the Holy Ghost into the Church, to abide therein, and therein to testify unto Christ until Christ shall come again. For, dear brethren, if Christ be testified unto, His glorious person revealed, and His mighty work displayed, then is the whole Godhead testified unto: for in Him dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily. He was not the WORD merely, but He was the will of the Father, so that He could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father:" and He was not only the fulness of the Father's will, and of the word of the Son, but He was also the fulness of the power of the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth in Him without measure; so that He could say of the Spirit, "He shall testify of me;" "what-

soever He shall hear that shall He speak. . . . He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." Which mystery of the fulness of the Godhead—Father, Son, and Spirit—that was manifest in Christ is expressed by Himself in these words: "All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I that he (the Spirit of truth) shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." The Father pours His fulness into the Son, "that men should honour Him even as they honour the Father;" the Son pours all His fulness into the Spirit, that He may carry it into His Church, which is His fulness, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. And the Church, the temple of the Holy Spirit, with her apostles at her head, does best obey the impulse of the Spirit when she beareth testimony of Christ, and is by Him filled with all the fulness of God. And it is only when the Church hath so vexed and quenched the Holy Spirit, and so dishonoured Christ in the person of His Divine Witness, as to be left in much barrenness and leanness, that we are obliged to call her attention back to the cause of her pitiful poverty, by discoursing to her of the Spirit's office, and remonstrating with her of the Spirit's neglect; yea, and threatening her concerning the sin against the Holy Ghost, which cannot be pardoned. For as in natural things, a man when he is in good health and full of lusty life, thinketh no more of it, and talketh no more about it, but is mighty in word and deed, and ready for all manner of work which is proper to the natural life; so in spiritual things, he who is in good health and full of life doth shew the same by fulfilling the life of Christ and keeping all His words and commandments. And as it is a sign of infirmity and sickness to be talking about our health, and economising our powers of action, so is it a sign of weakness in the spirit to be talking about the Spirit and searching into His office, and feeling for His influence, as at this day we are wont to do. And, therefore, brethren, as one straitened along with you by that narrowness and penury into which the Church is come, I am, you see, drawn in the very beginning of this discourse to speak expressly about the Spirit, instead of testifying in the

Spirit to God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the grace and peace of the Spirit proceedeth.

Nevertheless, though these things be true, and ever to be borne in mind, especially in times like these, when the Divine Dove doth, as it were, make His last fluttering flight about His beloved nest, the Church, before leaving its foulness for ever; it is also true that both the Son of God and the Holy Spirit bear testimony of themselves whenever their divine personality is called in question. Wherefore our Lord, to those same Jews to whom He had said, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true," did upon another occasion, when they challenged Him in His own words, "Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true," make answer to them right boldly, yea, and indignantly, "Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true. . . . I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me." So also the Holy Ghost, though ordinarily, by the mouth of His Church and her apostles at her head, He fulfilleth His proper function in the Godhead to bear testimony by the life and word of quickened spirits only of the Father and the Son; yet whenever any false spirit hath gone abroad, as the spirit of Antichrist, He doth at once bear testimony of Himself, as you find in the whole of the first epistle of John, especially in the 2d and 4th chapters thereof, where it is thus written: "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." Now, the unction or anointing of the Spirit was that which constituted Him the Christ, or the Anointed One, even as the power of the Father constituted Him the Lord: as it is written, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, for he hath anointed me;" and in another place, "God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of joy above thy fellows." This unction from the Holy One, therefore, which the Spirit by John declareth the true election to have received is no other than Himself, concerning which He further testifieth thus in the same chapter,—“But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is

truth, and is no lie, and even as he hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." All which the Holy Spirit declareth in that place concerning Himself, because of certain false spirits which had gone forth into the Church, and had drawn many away into apostasy ; not indeed of the true anointing, which abideth,—“ For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us ; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” And in the 4th chapter, the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of the beloved disciple, doth thus testify concerning Himself against all false spirits : “ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God ; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God : Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God ;” thus making the touchstone of His own presence and identity to depend upon His testifying unto Christ, even as Christ made the touchstone of His Messiahship to depend upon His constant and faithful witness to the Father. And on the other hand, He maketh the proof and detection of a false spirit to depend upon them refusing that testimony, saying, “ And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God : and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come ; and even now already is it in the world,”—a spirit whose going forth from hell was to bear testimony of a Christ not yet come, and in favour therefore of one yet to come ;—Satan, I make no doubt, in his own good time being about to present himself unto the world in the person of the last great head of the beast, as the very Lord God whom men should worship. In pursuance of which his grand scheme, he began from the first by sending forth false spirits to seek to counteract the testimony of the Holy Spirit to our Jesus, and do away with the faith of His heavenly and eternal and divine being from the minds of men ; in which he hath all but succeeded, first among the Jews, then among the Arians, and finally by that damnable apostasy of Rome, which hath let in upon us infidelity, and which hath deluged and subverted all the Protestant churches, and gripeth and grappleth with the Holy Spirit in these our British churches ; a thing which

no one will believe, but of which I will testify for ever. Whereupon the Holy Spirit, seeing Himself denied and counterworked, doth forget all ordinary methods of operation, and turn about to defend Himself and to bear testimony of Himself, after the manner which I have now quoted, and which you will do well at your leisure to peruse.

I have one other remark to make introductory to my discoursing on this passage; which is, that although it is most true that the witness of the Spirit and of His servants the inspired apostles be to Jesus, yet is it also to the Father in Him. For what is the testimony to Jesus but that He is the Son of God who is come in the flesh? and what is a Son without a Father? In testifying to Christ's name, the Son, He doth also testify to God's name, the Father; not to the Father apart from Christ, but to the Father in connexion and union with the Son—as seen in the Son, as known by the knowledge of the Son, as manifest in the manifestation of the Son, preserving the distinctness of the person in the unity of the substance. And as no one can say that Jesus is the Son of God or the Christ but by the Spirit, I may say that it is in the Spirit we know both the Father and the Son, distinct from Himself indeed as to personality, but as to substance one. Hence our Saviour in the days of His flesh doth as often say, “The Father will send you,” as He doth say, “I will send you another Comforter;” and when He declares the office of the Comforter to testify of Himself, He adds this as the reason of it,—because “all things that the Father hath are mine.” So also when about to ascend into glory, and there to bestow the Spirit, He devoutly and duly acknowledgeth the Father there, saying, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth;” and for the communication of the same unto His Church He giveth the commission to “go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;” presenting baptism as the sign and seal of the fellowship which the Church on earth hath in all the power which is given unto the Head of the Church in heaven. Accordingly, the Spirit, when rebuking the false spirits that had gone abroad from the commission of Satan, doth give this

other test,—“He is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.” We are therefore taught to expect that the true witnesses by whom the Spirit spake should bear this constant testimony to the Father and to the Son, as we find it to be in the text, and in all the texts where the benediction occureth. For in every one of them it is “grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

These remarks which we have made upon this point of doctrine do not only clear away all those sceptical doubts and ignorant surmises which Satan is spreading abroad over the souls of men concerning the office of the Holy Spirit,—as, whether He should be prayed to, whether He should be worshipped, and a great deal of other fantastical questions which come out by stealth and arise from the gross ignorance that prevaieth upon the subject of the Trinity through our much making of the oné doctrine of the Atonement, and the one topic of the Cross, as if it were all in all ;—besides, I say, answering all those sceptical doubts concerning the personality and office and worship of the Spirit which Satan is putting about like spies and insurrectionists through the host,—these remarks do naturally introduce us to the subject of our discourse, which is the great origin and fountain of that grace and peace with which the apostle blesseth all the churches, which, as I have said, is in all the epistles set forth as twofold, proceeding from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Now, as no one can for a moment entertain the thought that these two do divide the blessing between them in such a manner as that the one should have so much of it and the other so much more of it to bestow, we must look for the explanation of the mystery of its twofold origin in some other way. And seeing it is not in the way of share or division that the grace and peace cometh from these two Divine fountains, it must be in the way of passage or transition from the one to the other, and from them unto us,—first from God our Father to our Lord Jesus Christ ; and from Him to those who are made partakers of the blessing. The gift itself is grace and peace, which includeth all the benefits of redemption,—not only the present work of the Spirit

upon the souls of believers in their regeneration, but His future work upon their bodies in the resurrection, and upon their destined dwelling-place in the fulness of time, when the purchased possession is redeemed. But as the first of these is the pledge and earnest of all the remainder, we say shortly, that the grace and peace with which the apostle blesseth the Church of God is the possession of the Holy Spirit ; and the two sources from which it proceedeth are God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, from whom it is to be firmly believed that the Holy Ghost hath His procession before all time, in the depths of the eternity of the Divine Being.

Now as concerning the first of these eternal and perennial fountains of grace and peace, that is, "God our Father," I observe of the name God, that it is in the original the same word by which the Greeks were wont to denominate the Supreme Being, when they spake indefinitely, and without respect to any of the idolatrous forms or peculiar attributes under which they worshipped Him. In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the general name by which He is known is the same that being translated into our language is God. For example, in such expressions as these,—*"the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob," "the God of your fathers," "Jehovah your God;"* so also in the New Testament, when the Divine Being is mentioned in general, without any of His attributes or personalities, the same name is given to Him as in the 1st chapter of John's Gospel—*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God."* So that we may say in general that the name God implies the supreme unity and majesty of the Godhead, without any reference simply to the specialities of His revelations. And hence the same name has come to be applied to those who under Him are invested with power and authority in His Church, as in the 82d Psalm—*"God standeth in the congregation of the mighty ; he judgeth among the gods,"* which our Lord interprets as applicable to those to whom the word of the Lord came. *"Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods ? If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came," &c.* This name I reckon to

belong to kings and magistrates who use their power in sustaining and promoting the Church of Christ; whose office doth therein resemble the office of God, who ruleth and governeth all things for the good of His chosen ones. For the quarrel which God hath with these gods in the 82d Psalm is, that they judge unjustly and accept the persons of the wicked,—that they know not, neither will understand, but walk on in darkness: whereupon all the foundations of the earth are gone out of course. Whereupon prayeth the Church, “Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.” As being supreme over them, His vicegerents upon earth, He is called “the God of gods.” And when Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is brought the second time into the world, His Father saith, “Worship him, all ye gods;” which, indeed, the apostle in the Hebrews hath rendered, “Let all the angels of God worship him,” but in the original it is, “All the gods.” Now, concerning this name of God it is further to be observed that it is not the same with “the Lord,” which in the Old Testament is generally the translation of Jehovah, as “the Lord God” is in the original “Jehovah Elohim,” or “Jehovah God.” In the 1st chapter of Genesis the name given to the Supreme Being is simply “Elohim,” or God; but in the 2d it is “Jehovah Elohim,” or “the Lord God.” This title, “the Lord,” by which God is often designated in the Old Testament, and Christ almost always in the New, is truly equivalent to Jehovah, the name by which He was not known unto Abraham, but by which He became known to Moses, when He spake to him from the bush, and entered into covenant with the nation of Israel. It signifies His everlasting unchangeableness and His constant faithfulness: “I AM THAT I AM,” or as some render it, “I shall be that I will be.” This name of Jehovah was so sacred that the Hebrews would not pronounce it, and rendered it into the Greek tongue by (*ὁ κύριος*) “the Lord,” which afterwards our Lord appropriates to Himself in the Apocalypse: “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come.” Peter had already claimed it for Him upon the plea of His resurrection, when he concluded his sermon on the day of Pente-

cost, with these words—"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ," that is, both Jehovah and the Anointed One, (Acts ii. 36.) This title of "the Lord" is therefore appropriate to Christ, and as such given to Him in the text: it belongs to the second person of the Trinity by special inheritance, and not to the Godhead in its revealed and undivided essence, for which the proper name is God. The name Jehovah which He took to Himself in His peculiar relation to the Jewish people, was, like everything else connected with that dispensation, prophetic of Him that was to come, and answers to that of Micah,—“Out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” It was Christ that spake with Moses in the bush, and whose goodwill is promised unto Joseph in the latter days; and to Him the title of Jehovah or Lord properly belongeth. But the name of God, concerning which we now discourse, is proper to be given to the Godhead in its unity, as when we say, “There is but one God only, the living and true God.” And when we say, “Let us worship God,” we mean the substance of the Godhead without any special respect to the personalities thereof. And this is what we have to say in general with respect to the holy name before us.

But when the time came to open the mystery of the Trinity,—which was not until the Son proceeded forth from the bosom of the Father, and took unto Himself flesh of the Virgin Mary,—this name of God received a special and particular application to the Father, who is the first person thereof. For the name Father wanteth something to raise and enlarge it from the common and vulgar use which is made of it amongst men. And, besides, there was needed some peculiar design also which should set forth the peculiar dignity of that Divine person over the Son which is begotten by Him, and over the Holy Ghost which proceedeth from them from all eternity. For these two ends nothing could serve so well as to prefix the constant name of the Godhead, and say, “God the Father,” wherein are signified at once all these

things: first, that it is "Our Father which art in heaven," of whom we speak; secondly, that He is "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in Him our Father;" thirdly, that He is the fountain, the abysmal fountain, from which proceedeth both Son and Spirit in the eternal depths of the Divine being, before there was a beginning; fourthly, that He is the eternal God now by grace revealed as "a Father," and never to angels or to men known as such before; and finally, that from the Spirit to the Son, and from the Son unto the Father, we ascend even to hold communion and fellowship with the unchangeable God. These ends of wisdom and grace are served by the addition of the name God to "the Father," in which combination I would understand God to denote the substance and the Father the person, just as the Son denotes the second person and the Lord Jesus Christ the substance, and the Ghost or Spirit denotes the person, and the Holy prefixed thereto the substance of the Godhead, which alone is perfect in holiness and the fountain of it. But be it carefully observed that the proper, and I may say the right Christian name of God is "the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost," into which name we baptize,— "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And if any one ask a Christian what is the name of his God, he doth not answer well unless he say, "The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost." And when in blessing we do say, according to the use and wont of our Church, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all," we use that word God in connexion with the Father, not to signify that He only is God, but to signify His Divine substance; just as for the same reason we use the title Lord Christ unto Jesus, and the title the Holy unto the Spirit. And this, I take it, is the true reason why the title God is usually prefixed to the Father.

Now, as for briefness the person of the Son is often denominated simply the Lord, or Christ, and as the person of the Holy Ghost is often denominated "the Spirit," or "the Holy," so is the person of the Father simply denominated God. As when Christ is called "the Son of God," it is not

meant that He is the Son with relation to the Spirit, but with relation to the Father only ; yet not to the exclusion of the Spirit from the substance of the Godhead, nor yet to the exclusion of Himself. When I say Christ is the Son in the Godhead, I mean He is that person of the Trinity called the Son ; but when I say He is the Son of God, I say He is the Son of that afterwards known by the name of "the Father." We say, "the Son of God," and not "the Son of the Father," because God was not known to be the Father until the Son revealed Him as such. Before the procession of the Son, he was God, and not the Father ; and the object of the procession of Christ was to make God known as the Father. Therefore the Son must be known before the Father can be known ; and when we see the Son before we have heard Him declare the Father, how shall we name Him ? for as yet we know not the Father. We can name Him no otherwise than "the Son of God ;" and to all intelligent creatures the Son is before the Father ; and by knowing the Son we know the Father, just as the light was before the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the other objects which it manifests. But when we know the Son we no longer rejoice in the unity of God, but we rejoice in the trinity of the unity of God, and delight to call God Father, and with reverence and fear we call the Father God, which is all contained in that verse of the 1st chapter of John : "God no one ever saw : the only-begotten Son, he being into the bosom of the Father, the same hath led him out." I have translated the verse literally to keep the strength and force together. It first declares that "no one ever saw God ;" and it is added elsewhere, "nor can see, nor can approach unto." Him who is invisible, the only-begotten Son hath led out. How ? By coming forth Himself, in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily and was looked upon under the veil of flesh ; and shall be looked upon through eternity in the glory of our King. And who is this Son that hath led the Godhead forth to be beheld ? He who existed in the bosom of the Father ; the *ὁ ὢν*, or the "I am,"—"into the bosom of the Father ;" that is, impenetrating the Father,—not resting there and occupying one place, but occupying all within, filling the invisible, and containing in Himself the fulness of the invisible. As

it is written, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" and again, "If ye had known me, ye should have known the Father also." Thus it is, brethren, that there was no name for the Father's being but God, until Christ the Son taught the other name; and while He was teaching that name, He must take unto Himself the name of the Son of God. And so this appellation of God continues still to be used sometimes instead of the Father, as in the benediction at the conclusion of 2d Corinthians, where it is written,—“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.” In other places, as in 1 Cor. xv., and James iii., the explicative is added, “even the Father:” “Then shall He deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father;” “Therewith bless we God, even the Father.” And sometimes it is written, “God and the Father:” “Pure religion, and undefiled, before God and the Father.” And in Col. ii. 2, the whole gospel is called the mystery of God and of the Father and of Christ. And in the 8th chapter of 1st Corinthians, where the apostle is speaking expressly in contradiction and contradistinction to the gods of the heathen, saying,—“We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one; for though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as there be gods many and lords many,” it is immediately added in the 6th verse,—“But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” Here the distinction which we touched above between God and Lord is expressly given, the former being the name of the supreme, unalterable, underived divinity of the Father, the latter the name of the derived office of the Son, in which He is invested by the Father; as it is written,—“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” To me, therefore, the name of God prefixed to the Father, or added to it by the explicative *even*, or conjoined to it by the conjunction *and*,—God the Father, God even the Father, God and the Father,—is so far from being an encumbrance or trouble to our orthodox

doctrine of the Trinity, that it is absolutely necessary when we would fully express it, and cannot well be spared at any time, except in baptism, when the bare and naked name of the Christian's God was to be given. For the title God prefixed to the Father doth express that fundamental principle of the Trinity, that of Him the Son is generated, and from Him and His Son the Holy Ghost proceedeth. This is His single prerogative, His precedency in being, though not in time, which as properly belongeth to Him as the title of Lord and Christ doth to the Son, or the title of Comforter doth belong to the Holy Spirit. And he who doth not receive these eternal relations of the Divine persons in the blessed Trinity can receive nothing, and will soon lose what he may have received concerning particular doctrines of justification, and atonement, and experience, and so forth, through all their catalogue of commonplaces, which in these times have taken the importance and prominency of the Divine persons; so that I may say, instead of there being three persons in the Godhead, from whom all good and blessed gifts of the Christian life are derived, there be as many as there are evangelical doctrines upon which the people dote, and of which they will hear the sweet sound every Sabbath day. But the doctrine which doth not ascend unto God falleth short of true teaching, of the teaching of the Spirit; and the doctrine which doth not terminate in the Father and the Son falleth short of the testimony of the Spirit, whose office it is to testify of the Father and the Son, and of nothing else that I know of.

But those who would infer, that because the name of God is prefixed to the Father, and not to Christ or to the Holy Ghost, there is divinity only in the first person of the blessed Trinity, have no ground whatever to stand upon; for that word God upon which they go is really a very common name in the Old Testament and in the New also, as we have seen; and is nothing in itself so revered as that name of "Jehovah," which passed, through the Septuagint to the New Testament, into the name of "the Lord." And though Paul in reasoning against the heathen gods, which are but dumb idols, doth well attest that there is but one God, even the Father, he doth in the same breath attest that there is but one Lord Jesus Christ,—

giving the distinction as consisting in this, that "of the Father are all things, and we in him;" and "by Christ are all things, and we by him;"—the Father being the God or primary founder "out of whom" all things proceed, and we "into" Him; the Lord Jesus Christ being the substance and subsistency by whom all these things are and by whom we are—the one the abysmal Will which willed all the creatures, the other the omnipotent Word which gave the law and constitution of their being, and both sending forth the Spirit to perfect them. But if any one would therefore deny Divine honour to the Son because the function He performeth in the creation and redemption of things is different from that of the Father, he wandereth very wide from all rules of right reasoning,—which would require him first to prove that the Father of Himself created or redeemed anything, that any creature is the single work of the Father; for of whomsoever a creature is the work, to that being he oweth his homage and worship. Now, if these heretics will go to and shew me that the Father created all things without the Son, or the Father and the Son without the Spirit, I will allow that the worship of that thing is due unto the Father alone; or if they will shew me that the Father created the Son in order that with Him He might create the Spirit, that these two might afterwards create the worlds—as our great poet but small theologian hath feigned—then all the things which the creature Son and the creature Spirit created would owe their worship to the Father. But oh, what a notion it is that the Father should create a creature, in order that afterwards with His creature He might go art and part in creating another creature, and then afterwards retire far away from the scene of active affairs, and leave these two creatures to work the world into form and consistency, and redeem it out of sin and misery! I utterly abhor and reject the base notion, that the Father is not present in all His works, whether of creation, providence, or redemption; and no one can deny that the Son and the Spirit are also all-present, and acting an essential part therein. What a notion this, that the Omnipotent should take into the fellowship of all His counsels, and the concert of all His plans, and the conjunction of all His operations, two creatures who,

however dignified, are but creatures still, and more inferior to the Creator than any imagination can take in, or any similitude represent! It were nothing to this that the potter should go to the vessel which he has just made and ask its help to make him a second, and do nothing afterwards without a consultation of the three. It were nothing to this that the will of man, instead of consulting with his intelligent reason and with his active powers, should go and consult with two statues of Minerva and Psyche which he had chiselled out of marble. These things are nothing so absurd as that base and crude scheme which our heretical divine but mighty poet hath invented for expressing the mystery of the Trinity. But if, brethren, it be written, as it is everywhere written, that the Son and the Spirit perform an essential part with the Father in the creation, subsistency, and redemption of all things which are in heaven and earth, then I say that all things in heaven and in earth owe their worship to the Father and the Son and the Spirit, from whom, and by whom, and in whom they live and breathe, and have their being.

Thus, dear brethren, have I discoursed to you of this first word, "God," in the name of the Father; it remains that I should discourse of the two following words, "our Father," and shew by what mystery of goodness it is that we should be permitted to call the eternal God "our Father;" but this I reserve for the subject of our next discourse.

To many of the present infants and unschooled disciples, who hold their heads high in the Church of Christ because they hasten and bustle this way and that way in the service of the religious world, it will seem that we have been wasting our time upon subtle niceties in this discourse; but unto you, dear brethren, who desire to enter into the mystery of God, and the Father, and Jesus Christ, whom to know is life everlasting, it will not appear idle or profitless that we have sought to clear the fountain from which all the streams of refreshing doctrine must ever flow. For what else came the Lord Jesus in the flesh but in order to manifest the invisible God? and shall we refuse to listen, to meditate upon that which He declared concerning the Father, and the eternal unity of the Father and the Son? God forbid! For what

end came Christ forth but to manifest the fulness of the Godhead? and shall we refuse to look into His face and peruse the glory of God? Then shall we never be changed into the same likeness from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of our God. Can any one know Christ without knowing the Father? Therefore the Jews rejected Him because they had not known the Father. Can any one come to Christ unless the Father draw him? Christ denieth it many times over. Can any one rest in Christ without desiring to know the Father? He that doeth so confesseth merely his total ignorance of Christ. For he that hath seen Christ hath seen the Father, and he is in the way to the Father. What mean they, then, by this shamefacedness to speak of the Father, and His sovereign will, and His electing love? Was Christ ashamed so to speak, who said, "All that thou hast given me I have kept. Thou hast given me power to give eternal life to as many as thou hast given me. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word." Do they think they can be ignorant of the Father, and have eternal life? Let them beware of devices and dealings of men. I tell you, brethren, and I solemnly give it to you in charge to be kept continually before your face, that if ye know not the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in their proper offices, and praise and glorify and exceedingly exalt them therein, you shall never have their presence and their favour; for it is man's chief end to glorify God. To worship God, and rightly to express the glory of His majesty, is the very end of heart and mind and soul and strength. Therefore have we reason to look upon the universal name, which is Christ; therefore have we a will to bend in lowly obedience to the universal will, which is the Father; and therefore have we all manner of active faculties of thought and feeling and spirit and working, in order to be filled with the power of the Holy Ghost, and serve God with our bodies and our spirits, which are His. Let us therefore, dear brethren, be stirred up to receive with joy and gladness all these things which are freely given us of God. Let us not say, We will be content with a little; but, We are not worthy of the least of Thy mercies, yet be it unto Thy servant according to all the riches of Thy gracious will. O God, for

Thy great glory we covet the best gifts, that we may serve Thee more perfectly ; for Thou knowest that we are sorely troubled and grieved by the remembrance of all our misspent time and misused faculties, our present leanness and infirmity, our ignorance, our folly, and our wickedness. Therefore we will not count ourselves to have already attained or to be already perfect ; but forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth to the things which are before, we will strive after the prize of our high calling in Christ : if only we might apprehend that for which also we have been apprehended of Christ.

## XVII.

### GOD OUR FATHER.

EPH. I. 2.

*God our Father.*

**H**AVING already considered the word "God" in this the name of the first person of the adorable Trinity, and shewn you that it designates His essential Godhead and His self-origination, as distinguished from the Son and the Holy Ghost, whose prerogative it is only to be self-existent, we now proceed to consider the other two words of the blessed name, viz., "our Father," which consisteth of two parts, the one appertaining to Him and essential to Him, that is, "*Father*;" the other appertaining to and essential to us, who would receive the grace and truth which flow from Him, that is, "*our Father*:" into which I would inquire separately, treating first of the origin and import of the name Father; and, secondly, of the appropriation of Him unto ourselves as our Father.

And, first, of the origin of the name Father, which the first person in the Godhead hath taken unto Himself, there can be no doubt that it is to be traced to the generation of the Son; which, if it be eternal, as is the orthodox opinion of the Church, then also is the origin of the name Father from eternity. When we say that the generation of the Son was eternal, we do not say so of the Son of man, which was verily in time, when He was begotten by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the blessed Virgin; but we say so of Him as the Son of God, which He was in the beginning, when as the Word He was with God, and was God. And from this eternal act of generating the Son it is that the self-originator in the Godhead hath from eternity the title of

Father, which in time became manifest when the Son was manifested. But as there are many who do not clearly discern their way in this mystery,—who are able to receive and to hold fast the eternal divinity of the Word, but have not been able to discern the importance or the truth of the eternal generation of the Son, I count it good at this point to shew a little the grounds of that doctrine, which since the days of the Arian controversy hath been ever held as an essential point of the orthodox creed. Now, towards the clearing of this question, to see where the exact point of the difficulty lies, we observe, that all believers in the Lord's divinity will agree that in the same sense in which He was the Christ constituted, and the Lamb of God slain, in the eternal purpose, so also was He the Son of God in the eternal purpose; in which also He was the Son of man. Therefore the question is concerning a matter higher than this—viz., whether He was in the very fact the Son of God from all eternity: and we answer that He was, and ought necessarily so to be, in order to the formation of the purpose. For what is this purpose but the Father's good pleasure to give up His Son unto the death for the eradication of sin, and the doing away with instability, and bringing out a perfect world for a praise and a glory to Himself? But where were the greatness or the grace of these acts if He had not known nor acknowledged nor manifested as yet the boundless love of the Father unto Him who was to be given up an offering for sin? The Word doth express His participation of all the Father's counsels, and His office in revealing them all: but the Son is that which expresseth His full possession of the Father's undivided affections, wrapping up in Himself all that love upon which the universe was to lean, as He wrapped up in his name of the Word all that wisdom by which the universe was to subsist. If it be an essential part of the eternal purpose of the Godhead revealed by Christ, that it contains the fulness of the Father's love in surrendering, as well as of the Father's wisdom in manifesting Christ, then I say that He who was surrendered must have been in the full possession of all the Father's love, as well as a sharer of all the Father's wisdom; or that He must have been Son as well as Word from all

eternity. There is the same connexion between His office of Prophet in time and His personality of Word from eternity, as there is between His office of Saviour in time and of Son from eternity,—the one expressing a portion of the incommunicable wisdom of God which He was fraught withal; the other expressing a portion of the incommunicable love of God, whereof the fulness was poured into His single bosom, which can alone contain the ocean of its fulness. When He is called, therefore, the Son of God, I understand the Only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father as His eternal dwelling-place; when He is called the Son of man, I understand Him the Son of the Virgin, who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

Such is the form, and such is the importance of the question, into which we shall inquire a little at the holy oracle, in order to the right apprehension of the origin of the name Father, which is proper to the self-originating Person in the Godhead. And I again recur to that remarkable passage of John i. 18, which being literally rendered is, "No man ever saw God; the only-begotten Son, the self-existing One, within the bosom of the Father, He hath led Him forth." Here we have Him called by the name "the only-begotten Son," and described as "the self-existing One within the bosom of the Father;" for I hold our version, "which is in the bosom of the Father," exceeding far short of the original, of which you may somewhat discern the force by reading with me Rev. i. 8,—*"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty,"*—literally *"the I am, the I was, and the I am to come,"* whence the word denoting present existence or self-existence is the same *ὁ ὢν* in the text under consideration, "the only-begotten Son," the I AM within the bosom of the Father. Again,—*"And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, the Son of man, the I am in the heaven,"* (John iii. 13.) Again,—*"Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was I am,"* which the Jews knew so well to be an assertion of self-existent divinity, that they took up stones to stone Him. Now giving to *ὁ ὢν*

in the passage before us the true import, we have it thus—"The only-begotten Son, the I AM within the bosom of the Father." Here, then, is the I AM or Jehovah of the Jews, the self-existing One, used synonymously with the only-begotten Son, and for the abode of His self-existence we have the bosom of the Father. Therefore the self-existing One, as such, is also the only-begotten Son, and He is also within the Father's bosom. This title, only-begotten Son, and this title, Father, I conclude are coeval with His self-existency, else would they never have been so linked with one another. The next passage to which I would call your attention for further light upon the eternal generation of the Son of God, is in the beginning of the Epistle to the Romans, (chap. i. 3,)—"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared [or, as it is in the margin, determined] to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Here the apostle sets about explaining or defining the meaning of the expression which he had used, "His Son Jesus Christ;" and what is his explanation? It consisteth of two parts: first, "that He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;" that is, as a man, or in His human nature, or as "the Son of man." But this did not determine Him to be the Son of God; that is to say, His character as the Son of God ariseth into a higher region than His character as the Son of man, and must be otherwise ascertained. Does not this of itself imply that these names, Son of man and Son of God, are not synonymous, as would be the case if He were not the Son of God from all eternity? For if not from all eternity, then at what time? Certainly at that day when He was begotten of the Holy Ghost; and if at that day and in that act, then the names are synonymous. But here it is said that He was made of the seed of David, but determined or declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead; where, not His conception of the Virgin by the power of the Holy Ghost, but His resurrection from the dead, proveth Him to be the Son of God; that is, the power displayed there over the prince of darkness, and the perfect holiness, so that death

could not hold Him, gave demonstration of His being the Son of God, as His flesh and humanity and birth of the Virgin proved Him to be the Son of man. Now two things which are ascertained by two such distinct demonstrations must be in themselves distinct. Besides, observe the difference of expression: He was made of the seed of David, but He was determined from amongst all men to be the Son of God. Now, if this idea, nay, if this reality, be the Son of God, this species and form of being, how could any one be determined or proved to be He? The thing must exist which you would find out by tests; the point which you would prove must have a reality in truth, otherwise you are pursuing a shadow, and seeking to ascertain a nonentity. Furthermore, it is manifest from various incidents in our Lord's life, that the Jews had a constant conviction that He who was to come as their Messiah was the Son of God; not that He was to be made a Son in order to be Messiah, but that the Son of God and no other was to be their Messiah. However the wiser and more philosophical might have looked for Him as the pre-existent Word of God, it is certain that the mere theological and the common people looked for Him as the pre-existent Son of God; for when the Lord presented Himself to them as the Son of God, they took up stones to stone Him, saying that He blasphemed, "because thou being a man, makest thyself God." Again, the high-priest adjured Him by the living God "that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." And therefore it was said to His mother "that He should be called the Son of God." No doubt this name was proper to Him because of His supernatural generation, just as is said of Adam in a certain place, "that he also was the son of God;" but in a far higher sense, by reason of that eternal relationship in which He was the only-begotten Son of God, is He named by this name. Any one who will read deliberately the discourse of our Lord to Nicodemus in the 3d chapter of John, will be convinced of this point of doctrine perhaps more than by any laboured demonstration. In verses 14, 15, He speaks of Himself as the Son of man, who is to be lifted up as was the serpent in the wilderness; but in the two fol-

lowing He speaks of Himself, not as the Word which had been sent, but as the only-begotten Son, saying, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world that he might condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." Now what meaning were there in saying that God had sent His only-begotten Son, if so be that before the time of His mission He was not His Son? It is this Son which Paul says was made of the seed of David. Therein lay the work of the Spirit,—to make Him of flesh, and afterwards to declare Him by the resurrection as the eternal Son of God. With respect to those passages in the second Psalm and elsewhere in the Old Testament, where God appointeth a day for His generation, and which St Paul hath quoted in the first of the Hebrews, they refer to the manifestation of Him as the only-begotten Son, but no more affect the eternity of that relationship, than His manifestation as the Christ affects the eternity of that relationship, or His manifestation as the Sacrifice the fact of His having offered Himself before the foundation of the world.

Without entering further into this point of doctrine, except to recall to your mind its very great importance, inasmuch as there could be no manifestation of the grace of God in the purpose of redemption from the simple knowledge of Christ as the Word; and as the grace of God is the main discovery contained in the purpose of human redemption, it is most necessary that we should know the Word to be also His only-begotten Son in His bosom, whom above all measure He loved and delighted in, and whose surrender and sacrifice and forth-going might be unto all the creatures,—the great, the everlasting, the all-subduing evidence and token of the grace which God hath in Him towards all His creatures, even towards the fallen;—leaving, I say, this great and capital point of doctrine to your meditation, I do now proceed to shew how there immediately proceedeth thence, upon the self-originating person in the Godhead, the title of Father. For where a son is, there must necessarily be a father, the generation of a son is that which constitutes the

relation of a father ; and therefore if the only-begotten Son was generated from all eternity, God who generated Him must from all eternity be the Father. Concerning the mystery of the eternal generation of the Son in the bosom of the Father, God forbid that I should speculate, or even venture to think that I can comprehend it, or that I would liken it to anything in the heaven above or in the earth below. While I reverently contemplate it, and meditate upon it as a mystery of the Divine Being hid within Himself, and receive it implicitly as a matter of divine faith, revealed for our knowledge of God, and comfort and delight in Him, all that I would attempt in discoursing thereof would be to shew unto His Church the streams of consolation and grace which flow from this most secret and mysterious fountain. Dear brethren, the knowledge that the first act of the Godhead was to generate a Son in His own image and likeness, who should contain the fulness of Himself, and dwell within Himself the object of all His delight, is such a proof of fellowship and communion and divine affection, as should fill every creature with trust and confidence, and assure our hearts before Him. Were this Son a creature, then it would have quite the other effect of exciting envy and disgust in all other creatures to behold God lavishing such excess of fondness, and bestowing such amplitude of love upon one creature, and exalting him by such immeasurable titles and unparalleled honours into His own immediate presence and fellowship and blessedness. I say that this Socinianism is the destruction and death of all confidence of the creatures towards God, and must of necessity beget distance and reserve when they behold such ravishment and blandishment, and exalted style and mighty prerogative, bestowed upon one above the rest. But being that Christ is not a creature but the only-begotten Son of God from all eternity, in whom all that is to be created hath its reality, when the Father beholds it, and loves it, and delights in it, for that He sees it in His Son, the offspring and excellency of Himself, what a height of honour,—oh, what an exalted birth-place and most noble stock doth it give to every creature, to me, to you, dear brethren, to think that we were seen of a long time, yea from the beginning of days, yea from all eter-

nity, in the womb of the all-creating Word, and were loved and beloved of the Father before all time, as a part—an essential part—of His own dear Son ! It doth at this moment fill my heart with such high contentment and holy joy, as words cannot utter, to know, and assuredly believe, that I had heretofore my being in the Son, which was in the bosom of the Father, and that I came forth from them in order that I might serve the purposes of the Father to glorify Himself in presenting His Son before all creatures for their homage and adoration, and everlasting obedience. I say, it makes my soul swell with ineffable delight, it lifts my ignoble being into a high nobility, it linketh my solitary and divided substance into high alliance, thus surely to believe, that albeit I am fallen and sinful with my fathers, and by reason of my connexion with Adam have come into my present most pitiful and lowly condition ; yet long before Adam was, and angels were, and sin was, I had a being, a blessed and a holy being,—I, even I, in the bosom of the Father, with that mirror and image of Himself, His spotless Son ; with that dearest object of His love, His only-begotten and well-beloved Son. And though I be very sinful and loathsome in my own sight,—how much more in the sight of God's holiness !—how comforteth it my soul to know that the Son Himself, in whose bosom I was beloved ere yet I was fallen or had an outward being, hath Himself followed me, followed all His offspring into their wretched quarters and most grievous condition, lying under the curse of God, and subject to a law which the flesh was over-weak ever to think of keeping ; that He under the same curse should come and contend with that infirmity and wretchedness, and overcome it, in order to bring us back again into that most sure and perfect blessedness which He had, and which in Him we had, before the world was ! I can conceive, dear brethren, the pains with which the Son parted with His children into an outward being and existence, the care which He took for the security of their well-being, if it were possible to prevent the long era of apostasy and alienation from the Highest. But seeing such a thing was not possible, forasmuch as it was the eternal purpose to manifest the Son himself to take away sin, I can next conceive the care and

exceeding skilfulness with which He would construct their being and their habitation, in order to be to them the assurance that their Parent would yet come Himself and be the rock of their stability and the refuge of their loneliness. O brethren, creation, though doubtless very good, is no joyful subject of contemplation to my soul. It is full of foundling-nakedness. There is the child, but where are its parents gone? There it is, with eye and ear and every sense, but it looketh for its parent in vain, who is not yet become visible. It was a great comfort in such a plight to give Adam an image of himself, taken from himself, in whom his soul might delight in beholding itself; but yet that blessed garden with it is no compensation for the sight of that glorious and blessed face which might not yet be seen; and though the inward consciousness of the soul beholding its own purity be a dear delight, it is not complete, because man is made to look, not upon himself, but upon the countenance of God. But when I look upon creation as the first step towards the manifestation of that countenance of God in Christ Jesus, then indeed it doth content me well. For now I behold the poverty and the peril of it to be undergone for the glory of God and the good of all things, in the revelation of the visible Godhead to be the head and rock and unremoved strength of the creature. Methinks I could be content to endure the trials of this present life, and its unceasing sorrow and wretched incumbrances, not for threescore years and ten but for the age of an antediluvian, yea and for ever, to know that by bearing it I was ministering my part towards the glorious manifestation of the only-begotten Son of God. This should have been the comfort and preservation of our first parents, to have known, (as doubtless they did know,) and to have borne in mind, that they were only fore-runners sent before to prepare the way of Him that was about to come,—types to represent the form of His being, like the morning star which telleth of the rising of the Sun of righteousness upon the world. And having failed herein, it became necessary, for this as well as other reasons, that Christ should be His own morning star, or, as the second Adam in flesh, that He should typify and represent His own coming in glory, in that glory in which He would have come first and only had sin

not entered into the world. And when our race had come into this perilous and wretched condition of fallen and sinful creatures, it ought to have been their sweet consolation that they were not yet cast off from being witnesses of Him that was to come. But now, instead of being witnesses and types of His glorious kingdom, they were witnesses and types of His grievous humiliation and painful sufferings. And now, dear brethren, that we have known Him, and do believe on Him, though we have not seen Him, as the sufferer, and also as the conqueror,—have seen Him, as the second Adam, do what the first failed in, and present the perfect and sufficient type, though in humility, of what He shall hereafter be in glory,—it ought greatly to content and delight us that we are called upon to follow His footsteps, in order that we may hereafter be advanced to His crown; and though we find ourselves come from the bosom of His Father where we dwelt with Him from all eternity, it is only to serve our little part towards the completeness of the great work, and for our service to be again brought into a constant and infallible union with the Son, and through Him with the Father, and be monuments of their power and grace, and love and blessedness, for ever and ever.

O brethren, what rich fountains of inexhaustible depth and plentiful refreshment do flow from the knowledge of this mystery, that from all eternity the Father generated His only-begotten Son, with all things present in Him, Himself complete in all things, and yet to be presented as the visible fulness of the Godhead! In that first act of the all-originating will of God, whereby He constituted Himself a Father, I do discern the eternal blessedness of His creatures for ever and ever, when the work now in progress shall have been completed. The holy creation shall be loved as that only-begotten Son was beloved. For why? Because they have kept the word of His testimony, and have not departed from their holy vocation of God. Not only because they were in Him from the beginning, but have continued in Him by faith in the witness which the Father hath given of His own Son. I say, I can perceive how the Father should love them as He hath loved Christ, (John xvii. 23),—because they had the

same mind in them that was in Christ, and stood faithfully for Him in perilous times. It is a great consolation to know that we were seen in Him and loved of the Father before the world was,—that we were chosen in Him to be holy and harmless, and without blame before Him in love. But more comfortable is it to know that in the midst of the great apostasy we have been, and are still, preserved faithful through the keeping up of that same union by the Holy Ghost through faith; and that not only we are in Him, but our very children are in Him, and therefore beloved of the Father; and the more beloved, I say, because of the foul confederacy and fell apostasy in the midst of which we testify, as Joshua and Caleb were the more beloved because they held fast their witness and boldness in the midst of the doubting and disbelieving host. Truly the Father himself loveth us, because we have loved Christ, and have believed that He came out from God. Truly the Father dwelleth with us and we in Him, because we keep the commandments of our Lord. We are His witnesses, not the less beloved because we are clothed with a tabernacle of corruption, and sent forth into a rebellious province of His dominions. The same fatherly love which over-canopied Christ with the wings of its care, even when all consolation seemed to Him to be departed and clean gone from His eyes, doth over-canopy every faithful fellow-sufferer in the time of his most terrible struggle and most sorrowful griefs of soul. Is God my Father?—then all is well. Loveth He me as He loved Christ?—then I am loved indeed. And am I a fellow-witness of Christ unto the Father?—then I am honoured indeed. And shall I, like Christ, return unto the Father?—then I am blessed indeed. And am I burdened with this body of sin in order to triumph over it by the Spirit, and by death to be delivered from it?—then I am contented indeed. But can such things be? Hath sin not for ever separated betwixt me and God? No more than the body which bore our sins separated betwixt Christ and God, which indeed it doth to us and did to Him, much as the cloudy sky separateth and divideth for a while between the clear and glorious face of the sun and the cold bosom of the earth which liveth and languisheth for his cheering and invigorating beams. O

brethren, what consolation, what assurance, what grace and joy, there is in this, the Fatherhood of God unto His Son, and unto all who belong to Him ! Into which I inquire no further at present, having already begun to dip into the second part of the subject,—our appropriation of Him,—which belongeth to another discourse.

All this consolation flows from the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son ; for if so be that Christ was not the Son from all eternity, then is the foreknowledge and purpose of God circumscribed with no boundary of love ; for though in the Word he may foresee all various forms of wisdom, yet in the Word is not manifested any form or fulness of affection : the Word may contain and bring forth affection which already existeth, but it is not the affection itself. There must be the love of husband to wife, or of parent to child, or of friend to friend, before the word of truth will express it. The word may lament its absence, it may set forth the longings and the widowhood of its loneliness, but will not, as it were, create that which it longeth after. Adam was alone, and it was not good that he should be alone. But though his word could name every creature, and in a manner determine the conditions of its kind, and of their relationship to himself and to one another, it could not express the relation of a husband to his wife, or of one human spirit to another, until it pleased God to constitute the object of his affection, and so bring forth in word the love which he bare towards it. Even so, dear brethren, the personality of Christ as the Word gives me no insight into the paternal love of God, nor any introduction whatever to His Fatherhood ; and unless there be some relation of amity and affection of ancient date, or as ancient a date as that of word, the word were to me a word bearing no burden of grace or love unto the heart of any creature. For how could it express the care, the origination, the augustness, the tenderness, the everything great and good contained under the holy name of Father, unless there were some one unto which to be a Father ? And to what can He be a Father if not to the second person of the Blessed Trinity ?—to what can He stand in any relation in which He hath not first stood unto Him, or through whom can the tide of any affec-

tion derive itself, but through Christ? Not to make Christ the only-begotten from eternity is, therefore, merely to exclude God from being known as a Father unto His creatures. I lay it down as a first principle in all sound theology that the fulness of the Father is poured into the Son, and returneth back through the Holy Spirit unto the Father, all creatures being by the Holy Spirit brought forth of the Son, in order to express a part of the Father's will and of His delight in His Son, which they do by union with the Son, promised through the operation of the Holy Ghost. So true is this, that even God's wrath and indignation against rebellious sinners had first to be expressed towards His own Son, in His humiliation and death. And so was it made apparent that, consistently with God's fatherhood over His creatures, there might be such a thing as sin, issuing in such a thing as death. For, consistently with that mother fountain of all relationship, that focus of all love, and fulness of all delight, which there is between the eternal Father and the eternal Son, that Son was humbled, was cut off; which, if it could be for a space of time, if it could be at all, is proof to me that it can be for ever; if it could be in the green tree, it can be in the dry. Oh! if it could be with Him who was the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, then may it be towards any creature, and towards all creatures, though they were as proud and princely as ever was Lucifer, the son of the morning. If then, as I believe, not only all possible things, but likewise all possible relationships in which God may stand to everything, from the most holy to the most unholy, have their relation, yea, and have had their manifestation also in the Son, then how much more that of fatherhood, which is the most ancient, and I may say the very rudiments of all the rest?

For consider this of father, I pray you, dear brethren, and think what and of what kind it is, and you will see what it is to doubt this in the being of the Godhead from all eternity, and what it is to believe it. It is even here on earth, and in this our fallen estate, the name for the originator of our being; it is the name for the strong arm which won the children's bread from the sterile earth; it is the name for the

tender bosom which nursed a mother's sickness and sustained a mother's feebleness ; nay, but look at Adam, and it is the name for him of whose substance the mother herself was made ; so that by the mystery of matrimony a woman doth forget father and mother and lose her name and her identity in her husband. And is not father the name for all authority ? so that kings, traced back to their fountain-head, were the fathers of their subjects, and still it is their highest honour to return into that simple dignity and to be called the father of their country. And is not father the name for all reverence ? so that priests, when they have reached their highest sanctity, are called fathers ; which name the imp of Satan hath chosen for his special prerogative, wicked and ambitious monopoliser that he is ! And is it not the name for all teaching and giving of instruction ? Who teacheth his children wisdom, who judgeth their quarrels, whose power stills their tumults, whose sword defends their habitation ? Oh ! it is a mighty combination of most precious and powerful, yea, and awful and holy things which that word father expresseth, yea which that word father is in the sight of God ; for I am not speaking poetically and sentimentally, but verily and soberly, yea, and godly. For if all these things were not couched in the relation of father, would God for the father's sake include the child in the holy covenant, if the child's being were not virtually included in the father's ? If the father might safely refuse any office which belongeth to one spirit over another spirit, or neglect any duty, or refuse to include in himself, and to fulfil, every relation in which it is possible for a man to stand unto a child, would the child be taken by God into full covenant for the father's sake ? No ; he would only be taken into covenant so far forth as the father represented and covered his being—no further. Blessed be the Lord for the sacrament of infant baptism, which settleth all disputes, and gives to father more than all which any word can express, even all which God's eye can behold, of origination, of dignity, of care, and of love !

If such amplitude be contained in the relation of a father, even under the present poor and distressed estate of manhood, how much more in his primitive glory, when he was

made in the likeness of God, and, as it were, to be a type of the divine constitution itself! Then was he upon the earth as God. Then did he rule, the monarch of the world—all things knowing, all things naming, all things commanding. Then stood he, containing within himself the teeming myriads of men, in sublime unity, his plurality not yet revealed, for as yet his wife was not taken out of his side. Oh, what a miracle!—oh, what a father was Adam! undisputed monarch, undivided father of all that were to be. There is a deep and an unfathomable mystery in that word—he was formed in the divine image, after God's own likeness. Angels do not so derive their being out of one. No angel ever possessed alone the solitude and the grandeur of his realm. O brethren, notwithstanding what I said above concerning the perils of creation, and its unattractiveness to my mind, yet when I look upon it as an object in itself, and consider it simply as an object of thought, I can discern in it, dear brethren, pregnant proofs of that which I have oft deduced from the incarnation—viz., that we greatly err in assigning unto humanity a lowly place in the scale of creation, and to this earth an indifferent place, if any place at all, in the eternal world; for sure am I that every step in the progress of its history since it came from the Creator doth prove to me that man was made to be the dwelling-place of God's delight, and that heavenly Wisdom hath made the habitable parts of the earth His chosen abode, and will yet make it the special and glorious centre of His visible majesty. But to return—

If, I say, the office of a father be so inclusive of all relationships,—of wife, of child, of every kind, for without a father there had been no procreation of life,—how poor were God, how straitened towards His creatures, how dark the depths of the name of God, how fearful its sound, how emptied of grace and loveliness, how stern of majesty, yea, I may say, how deaf and void, were He not before all creation a Father, and were He not known to the spirits which He created as a Father! And how could He, unless the Word were also His Son? If the Word be not a Son from all eternity, then God could not be revealed as a Father to the creatures whom He had made; and, not being revealed as a Father, how barren

were the revelation ! To us, at least, how barren, unto whom father is the fulness of all kindness, and the wealth of all love. I cannot even see how the relationship of creature could be expressed to man if this were excluded, as excluded it must have been, if the Word were not also the eternal Son. I can see how He might be the Creator of all the lower creatures which are unconscious of His being, and are made to look up to man as their God ; but how He could create a man, and make Himself known to him as his Creator, without including not one but all the offices of the Father, I cannot conceive ;—whence it is said, in summing up the genealogy, that Adam was the son of God. But, as I have shewn, it were merely impossible that He could reveal Himself as a Father to the creature unless He were first known to the Word as a Father ; for this were to suppose that there are relations out of the Son, which were to suppose that He did not contain the Father's fulness, which was to make Him a creature at once. Wherefore, it is most necessary that we should receive and devoutly believe, as it is written in our Larger Catechism, that "the Lord Jesus Christ" is "the eternal Son of God, of one substance and equal with the Father."

## XVIII.

### GOD OUR FATHER.

EPH. I. 2.

*God our Father.*

THE doctrine which I have already declared concerning the eternal generation of the Son, and the eternal Fatherhood of God the Father, doth open a wide door of spiritual contemplation, by which let us endeavour to enter in, for our edification and delight, through the good grace of the Holy Spirit. It shews us of what kind is the Divine will, how full of love, how entire and complete in love,—according to that which is declared by the apostle John, “God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him,”—that the first great act of origination in Him who originateth all things should be to generate the Son as the everlasting object of His delight. Now, as everything that is, or hath been, or is to be, is included in the Son, who is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, how surely and steadfastly ought we to believe, that be the appearances what they may, there is and can be nothing in the will of God but love! That as the Son is the full expression of the Father’s will, never to be added to, nor taken from, the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person; and as the Son is wholly beloved, without variableness or shadow of change, it cannot be that anything created by the Son should be otherwise than lovely in the Father’s sight, who beheld it first in His well-beloved Son. As from the sun in the firmament nothing but light can proceed forth, so from the Son of God, the fulness of the Father’s love, nothing but love could come forth, whatever shape it may assume.

This I lay down as a first principle, necessarily derived from the doctrine that the Son was begotten before the worlds were made; and that in Him the Father's will expressed all its fulness; that there was no act of will previous thereto, and no act of grace which doth not proceed thence, as rivers from the fountain. This is my assurance, that angels were created in pure love, and that in pure love man was created, and the worlds, yea, and everything which hath a being. And forasmuch as my coming into being is a work of creation, I believe that I myself am created in pure love, and every one who now heareth me. This, I say, all follows from the eternal generation of the Son, and the creation of all things by the word of His power. For what is creation? It is the work of the Son to express so much of the Father's will as is therein expressed. And if the fulness of the Father's will was fulfilled in generating the Son of His love, then, verily, every part or every form of it was also therein expressed. But you have no assurance of this if the Son be not begotten before all ages, but only from the time at which He was begotten; nor can you have any assurance of it, if His Sonship be only an accidental and temporary, not an essential and eternal attribute of His being; nor, in the third place, can you have any assurance of it if He be but a creature;—because in all these cases His Sonship is only a partial, not a universal expression of the Father's will, which may have other expressions for aught we know. But if every mood of it be included in one mood, and that one mood of the Unchangeable be to generate a Son in whom may be His delight, then are we sure that the will of God is all included in the word "love."

The importance of this point of faith will, perhaps, be best seen by unfolding a little the consequences of these three adverse positions.

First, If He were but a creature, however exalted in His being above all angels, above all archangels, and before all other creatures, and created on purpose to create them all, then mark how completely we should be defrauded of our conclusion that God is love. For, on that supposition, we have no complete opening or revelation of God's mind and will. We have only a visible creation, we have no

manifestation of His perfect and complete image; and that creation is a very ambiguous one, mingled of good and evil, as you behold and feel. But even granting that it were all good, it is still but one work of many that may yet be. God's will is still more in mystery than in light. For no one work can reveal the complete work of Him that made it, but only so far forth as it doth reveal it. And how there can be complete trust or assured love towards one whom we have no complete revelation of, I cannot conceive. I do not mean that it is necessary to comprehend God, in order to love Him and trust in Him. You know how often I have exposed the profanity of such a thought as that we can comprehend God, or that He should be comprehensible. But we know what is the nature of the relation between a father and a son, that it is the strongest love. And, therefore, if God maketh it known to us that His eternal act of origination was to generate a Son, an only-begotten Son, who should be His express image, and the fulness of His Godhead, and one with Him in being, though distinct in personality,—then we are assured that the only complete act of the Godhead is love and fatherhood, and that love and fatherhood doth include all the rest. And, furthermore, when this Son is manifested, we have the Father manifested in all the glory and perfection of His being; and, in Him beheld, perused, felt, and known, we know, behold, and feel the Father also. But if He is a creature that hath been manifested, then it is at best a work of God we have been contemplating, not God himself, who is still as much behind the veil as ever; and revelation is no revelation; and, in truth, there is no revelation made of God, but only of a creature of God. It is to no purpose for you to answer that this exalted creature might be commissioned of God to this effect of revealing Him unto men; for I deny that a creature can comprehend or contain, so as to make known the fulness of God. All that he can do is to shew forth God's workmanship in Himself. I am a piece of God's workmanship as well as he, and may teach him a lesson, as properly as he may teach me one. And the lesson I learn from him can in no wise obliterate the lesson I learn from myself. And if these disagree, then, depend upon it, I will cleave to my own intimate ac-

quaintance with my dear self, rather than to any message brought to me from afar by another, who is but a creature like myself. As little is it to the purpose to say that he doth confirm his message by miracles, and bring it home in defiance of its incoherency and inconsistency with my former knowledge. For how shall I know the power of the creature of another sphere, whether he is using it according to God's mind or according to his own, for ends of good or for ends of evil, seeing Satan hath a great faculty in the latter kind, though he be but a creature? Besides, though he could authenticate his whole message to the very uttermost iota, it is only the burden of a creature's tale, it is only the measure of a creature's apprehension; and I am brought acquainted with a creature's strength of being, and faculty of knowledge, and power of communication: but with God I am as little acquainted as before. If so be that I and all things visible and invisible were made by a creature, then I and all things visible and invisible do only reveal that creature's power—no more, not a tittle more; and God is to me the unknown God. I may love that creature and bow to him, for him I do know: but God I neither love nor worship, for of Him I am wholly ignorant, altogether in the dark—a creature eclipsing Him. Love, therefore, there can be none, knowledge none, and worship none, upon this Arian, or Socinian, or Unitarian hypothesis.

Now, take up the second notion, that Christ is a Divine person, the same in substance and equal in power and glory with the Father, but that He is not the Son from all eternity, but only from the day of His earthly generation, or from some higher date which is still in time; and what have we whereby to know and assure ourselves of God's most gracious will? In that case, Fatherhood is not essential unto God, but only circumstantial, and, as it were, accidental, deriving its origin from something that hath happened in time, and known only amongst the sons of men. For when you say that Christ is not Son from eternity, you say that God is not a Father from eternity; and when you say that Christ is Son only with relation to the work of redemption, you say that God is Father only with relation to the same. By defining a time

and a place and a being, you exclude all anterior time, and all other place, and other beings. And the question is—If God be not known as a Father, save to fallen men, nor Christ as a Son, as what are they known? What is the essence of the relationship, if it be not the love of Fatherhood and the inheritance of Sonship? The only other relation is that of Will and of Word. But I have shewn that, though Will doth represent the self-origination of God, and from Him of all things, and Word, in the Scripture sense of the *λόγος*, do represent the full expression of that Will, whereby the unity of the substance is well enough preserved in the distinctness of the persons; yet is there no love or parental care, no goodness, no grace, expressed by that mode of stating and apprehending the relation between the everlasting Persons. And so, by making the quality of Father and Son to be in time, and to originate in a train of accidents, you do merely deprive yourself and all beings of knowing and delighting themselves in God as their Father. And whether that be a small matter, brethren, judge ye. Furthermore, if it be in time, and dependent upon this our fallen estate, then with this our fallen estate, when it is recovered, it must work itself out, and be no more existent for ever. So that even we who look for the redemption, must in the completion of it look to lose the knowledge of God as a Father. And as what then shall we know Him? Surely not as less loving, now that we are perfected; then as more loving—but what can be more loving than a Father? And yet as a Father we must certainly lose the knowledge of Him, if this title and relation of Father were taken up only in time, and to compass a particular end. And who that hath known the grace and goodness and loving-kindness of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, could bear that it should be abolished, and that we should return to know Him only as the Creator and Supporter of our being? And it were, methinks, a small recompense of the work of Christ, that it should only reveal the beams of the gracious countenance of God for a limited period of eternity, and over a small part of the habitable world—that the manifestation was only made to man, and only to fallen man, and only for the end of raising him to his former estate.

This, indeed, is the common notion ; but it is a very bare one, and clean contrary to the tenor of Scripture, which continually setteth forth the work of Christ as a work upon which the universe hangeth with expectation, and the angels look into with eager desire, making it an essential part of the mystery of godliness that God was seen of angels.

Now take up the only other possible supposition, that He takes His name and office of Son from the eternal purpose of God, in which He gave Himself as an offering for sin—that it is not essential to Him as the eternal Word, but belongs to Him as a party in the everlasting covenant and all-inclusive purpose of God. This is the highest ascent to which they can arise who doubt or deny the eternal generation. But even this will not avail : for, though the purpose carry us upward, beyond the fountain-head of time, into eternity, and include within itself all events which have been, which are, and which are to be, and so this last notion be saved from the absurdities which flow out of the other two ; yet doth it wholly change the character of the purpose itself, or at least destroy one of its essential features. For I assert that to the very existence of the purpose, His pre-existence as the Son of God is essential ; His pre-existence as the Word is not sufficient to constitute the purpose as I find it written in all the Scriptures. For the purpose is not a purpose of will only, but it is a purpose of goodness, and of grace, and of mercy, and of bounty,—in one word, it is a purpose of love, according to the good pleasure of His will. In this epistle there are three places in which the eternal purpose is mentioned : first, in the 9th verse of the chapter from which our text is taken, where the purpose is declared to be this : “ That in the dispensation of the fulness of the times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth.” And to know whether or not the essence of this union of all things with Christ be not grace, read the following verse, in which the purpose is mentioned a second time : “ In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” Now you know, brethren, how we have that

inheritance by adoption through Jesus Christ, as it is written, "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Turn now to the 3d chapter of Ephesians, at the 10th verse: "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Here the eternal purpose is made to include principalities and powers in heavenly places, and to reach them through the means of the Church. Now we all know that the Church is the great monument of grace. If, then, the eternal and all-inclusive purpose of God include in it grace and love as its very essence, and be indeed intended to shew forth the graciousness and loving-kindness of God unto all His elect creatures, by gathering them together in Christ, then I argue that, in order to the formation of such a purpose, Christ in whom it is formed must have been the Son previous to its formation. For what is grace? Is it not God's giving up Him whom He loved? "Herein was the love of God manifested, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." And the greatness of the grace is according to the greatness of the love which was set aside. Unless we know Christ to have been most dear unto God, we cannot apprehend the grace in surrendering Him. Now the relation of Word, as I have already argued, gives us no idea of love, but of will only; and without the relation of Father and Son, we have not that idea. Wherefore it is absolutely necessary to the formation of a purpose which should contain the infinitude of all grace, that the Father should have known Christ as a Son in the act of His origination, and loved Him with the fulness of the love of God, in order that, when He was surrendered in the purpose, we might be able to discern the fulness of the grace of God unto all creatures.

Besides, dear brethren, if we receive not the eternal generation of the Son, I consider an essential part of the doctrine of the Trinity to be lost—viz., the way in which the second person was originated. For that He is not self-originated, is a doctrine essential to the unity of God; and that He is self-existent, is essential to the doctrine of the Trinity. The

question therefore is, How hath He this self-existence? Not by creation verily, for then He were not self-existent; for the very meaning of creation is to bring something into being according to a fixed law, which it must obey, or, not obeying, must suffer loss. And every creature standeth before its Creator to the obligation of fulfilling that idea in His mind and purpose in His will which it was intended to body forth. And to talk of a creature being a creator, is really the confounding of all distinctions; so that the very fact of its being said that all things were created by Christ, is to me sufficient proof that He cannot be a creature. You might as well speak of a creature being delegated to be God, as of a creature being delegated to create—creation being the eternal function of Godhead, and one of its substantial attributes. Not by an act such as “Let there be light, and there was light,” not by an act of the power of His word, was the Word himself produced into being. By what mode, then, was He originated? There only remaineth two others—either by generation or by procession; between which there is this distinction, that while both equally imply the idea of the originating will of another, and self-existence (not creature-existence) in that which is originated, the former, to wit, generation, implies the most perfect love in him who begetteth, and the most perfect likeness in him who is begotten; the latter, to wit, procession, implies a full and fixed purpose in him from whom the procession is, and an active obedience and complete power of fulfilment in him who proceedeth. But procession doth not imply love, nor yet likeness, in him that proceedeth towards him from whom he proceedeth; neither doth generation imply obedience, but otherwise free and rightful inheritance: wherefore it is said, “Though a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.” We have no such expressions as the Father loving the Holy Spirit, or the Son loving the Holy Spirit—the love being always from the Father to the Son, and terminating in the Son, and from Him derived into all things by the procession of the Holy Spirit. Procession, therefore, or sending forth, doth not express the act of the origination of the second person of the Trinity; and though it be used of His coming into the world, “God so

loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son. . . . For God sent not his Son to condemn the world," yet we ought to remember that His coming into the world was by the work of the Spirit. His willingness to come forth was His one act of infinite grace; but the bringing of Him into outwardness was the mightiest act of the Spirit's power. As a Son, as the only-begotten Son, His proper place by right of birth was His Father's bosom, to fill the vastitude of His Father's incomprehensible and immeasurable bosom. This was His inheritance by right of eternal generation, and His self-existency entitled Him to remain there for ever, whither no one can approach, in that light which is inaccessible and full of glory. His self-existency therein, and His inalienable right thereto, made it an act of infinite love to come forth thence into the immeasurable distance and alienation of a sufferer for sin, in order to accomplish the purpose which the Father had purposed in Him, of honouring Him as the visible head of all things which He had created in heaven and in earth. But His generation did not consist in His coming forth, but His humiliation consisteth therein, and the Father's love unto His creatures is manifested thereby; and through the same wonderful and strange act is the work of the Holy Spirit accomplished. The generation consisteth in His being, then, the object of all love, and affection, and delight, unto the Father before the world was. Now, I say that the whole of this mystery of substantial love eternally existing, and to manifest which was the very end of the purpose—yea, and the very procession of the Holy Ghost—all this were lost, and is lost, to the knowledge and contemplation of the creatures, if we receive not the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son.

For, brethren, if I understand anything of the purpose of God in the creation and in the redemption of all things, it is to manifest something more ancient than the purpose itself; and what is that which is more ancient than the purpose? It is the being of the Godhead, the substantial and essential being of the Godhead. That which the purpose revealeth must therefore be pre-existent, existent before the purpose. And what doth the purpose reveal? It revealeth the Father's delight in His Son, and desire to honour Him: "That all men may

honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." Therefore, this delight in the Son, and desire after His glory, must be existent in the Godhead before the purpose. Secondly, It reveals the Son's desire and delight to manifest His Father's will, and His free submission of Himself to all penalties, in order to make manifest the glory of His Father. Therefore, this reverent affection and homage of the Son towards His Father must have been pre-existent in the Godhead before the purpose to manifest it was formed. Lastly, The purpose revealeth the activity and the power of the Holy Ghost to shew forth and outwardly realise, by creation and redemption, those correlative affections which existed in the Father and the Son, or, in Scripture language, to testify of the Father and the Son. Therefore, this procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, and love to manifest their being, must have been in existence before the purpose to reveal the same could be formed. But further, the purpose is to manifest the self-existence of these three persons, and their unity of substance ; notwithstanding which it also manifesteth therein their several offices and relations one to another. Wherefore, their self-existence, as well as their several relations and offices one to another, must have existed before the purpose could be formed. But in these barren and degenerate days, they have conceived such low, such very low ideas of the purpose of God, as if it were merely to counteract the fall, and devise an expedient to meet an accident, and clap up a temporary constitution, in order to save a few men dwelling upon the surface of a solitary world ; and of the incarnation they have attained to such a base mercantile notion, as if it were no more than an atonement for so many fallen spirits, a payment in kind,—so much suffering bartered against so much more suffering ; and of the consummation they have such unworthy notions, as if it were the destruction of this sinful world, and the judgment of the men who have lived on the face of it, and then the abdication of the Son from His mediatorial office ;—of all these things, I say, the religious worldlings have got such a low notion, that they can ascend to nothing, they can receive nothing, they can believe nothing. Oh, our fathers ! how you would blush to see us

dabbling on in these muddy waters, who thought you had fairly launched us out into the mighty ocean of Divine truth ! Oh ! when I read old Hooker and the Reformers, I can hardly believe that thus I am living amongst those, as their descendants, who are called the religious world in this day. And I gird up my loins, and say, But the sun shall not so set upon these western islands. Surely the Lord will give him a more glorious going down.

Furthermore, dear brethren, I utterly reject and abjure the principle upon which all the schemes and reasonings of the adversaries of this doctrine proceed ; which is, that the Godhead may at a time adopt an apparent form or mode of revelation, which it may at a future time lay down again. And I maintain, on the contrary, that though the purpose of the Godhead to manifest itself in and to the creatures must come gradually into being, according to the progress and procession of Divine wisdom, yet, when it hath come into being, it standeth fast, yea, and shall endure for evermore, and will never again be hid from the sight of the intelligent universe. The purpose declareth its burden by degrees, according to God's own good pleasure, after His own counsel, and in His own time, as it is written, "Which in his times he will shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords." But what of it is disclosed can never be closed up again ; whatever of it is closed standeth fast for ever : "Who speaketh and it is done ; who commandeth, and all things stand fast." Creation was the first step in the unfolding of the eternal purpose, the creation of the worlds : "by whom [that is, the Son] also he created the worlds,"—that is, not the stars and planets and sun and moon, which in astronomical language they call "worlds," but never in Scripture language, where "the worlds" are "the ages," or successive periods and stages in the opening of the Divine purpose, the new light which it cometh into, the successive progressions which it maketh to perfection ; of which one hath been running since the fall, called "the present world" or age, and another begins from the coming of the Lord, which is called "the world [or age] to come." The creation of these *âges*, or periods of the purpose, was the first work of Christ ; that is,

as I understand, the digesting of the great work into its successive parts, that it might be the most glorious and honourable unto the Most High. How many of these ages have come already into being we know not. Doubtless, the creation of angels was one, perhaps the fall of angels another, the creation of man a third, and the fall of man a fourth. But every one of these standeth fast—the angelic world, and the apostate angelic world; and if the paradisiacal state of man have disappeared, it shall reappear in that age to come of which it was but the type, And the fallen state of man is not gone, but existeth, as do all its deceased people, and shall through eternity exist; and so shall the righteous that are gathering to be a crown and a diadem unto the Lord. They all exist, and shall all require to be coexistent, in order to exhibit the completeness of the purpose. Now then, in like manner, most surely do the personal names which God assumes continue to exist. As the Creator, He continues to be known by us, as the God of Abraham also, as Jehovah also; though when He was born of a woman He added the name of Hoshea, and was Jehoshuah, or Jesu, or Jehovah, the Saviour. At His resurrection there was added, moreover, Christ the Lord, and He is now Jah Hoshea, Christ the Lord. None of these names have waxed old, none of them have been laid down. And when He taketh His new name at the second advent, He will not abandon His former ones; that is, He will be known as the God, the Creator, the God of Abraham, the Jehovah, the Saviour, the Christ, and the Lord, with whatever addition may be needed in that day to express the new glory which in that new age of the purpose He will put on. And I hold it to be no less than a false and ignorant assumption to say that He will ever cease to be clothed and manifested in the fulness of all these characters, and that for ever and ever. The one may and does rise a step higher than the other, and as it were includes it; but by being included, it is not thereby destroyed, but rather preserved with a new defence and safeguard. Now that He has become the Son of man, He will continue the Son of man for ever; now that He hath been manifested the Son of God in the resurrection, He will continue the Son of God for ever; and so onwards, because the

great end of the purpose is to manifest the eternal being of God in a visible form.

The only passage of Scripture which seems to oppose this is in 1 Cor. xv. The object of the apostle is to explain the very subject now in hand—viz., the progress and procession of the work of quickening all things in Christ which in Adam had died. First, “Christ, the first-fruits” of all. Secondly, “they that are Christ’s at His coming”—they that are Christ’s, and no more. This is the resurrection of the saints, or the first resurrection. Thirdly, “then,” or after that, “cometh the end,” when all shall be quickened. Concerning this end, hear when it is to be: not at Christ’s coming, but “when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God.” And when is this? “When He shall have put down” or ejected “all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” These two things, therefore, precede the delivering up of the kingdom—viz., the casting out of all authority and rule out of the earth, and the destruction of death. These things Christ doth after His coming; and having done them, He giveth up the kingdom. The apostle now proceedeth to take an exception for the Father: “For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God [that is, God even the Father] may be all in all,” (verses 27, 28.) The subjection of the Son here spoken of startles many, as if it meant that, from that time forth, He should cease to be known as Son; and so they come by those partial and insufficient views of the Sonship of Christ; for if it is to have an end, it may well have a beginning. But where do they find this to be asserted, that the Sonship shall cease? It is only that the Son himself also shall be subject, with all the things which have been brought under Him by the Father. The apostle having set Him forth as reigning in His own right from the time of His second advent to the time of death’s destruction, sets Him forth

as subject thereafter; but still it is the subjection of a Son —“Then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him:” not that He shall cease to be over all things, but that when He hath been brought into full sovereignty, He shall teach them all to acknowledge God even the Father, and shall Himself set the example of filial obedience: and so lead forth and head up the obedience and the homage of all the creatures of God, having brought them all into the same form of filial obedience of which He hath given them the example—to give the example of which He came forth from the bosom of the Father. And so the Fatherhood of God over all creatures together shall be established, and the filial obedience of all creatures shall be established, and they shall stand fast together in Christ, acknowledging God, and exalting Him over all. “And God shall be all in all,” undoubted, undivided Sovereign of the world, worshipped in His one visible Son for ever and ever, and for His sake obeyed and honoured for ever and ever, and He honoured even as the Father.

## XIX.

### GOD OUR FATHER.

EPH. I. 2.

*God our Father.*

**T**O the right consideration of every point of divine truth, dearly beloved brethren, there are three ways in which it ought to be considered : as it is in the eternal being and purpose of God ; as it is manifested to us in the revelation of God ; and the third, as it is applied to and appropriated by us for our promotion in the favour of God. Of which the first carries us with awe and reverence and self-extinction to contemplate the mysteries of the Father's will ; the second carries us with diligence and delight to peruse the wonderful and gracious manifestations of the Son's person ; and the third carries us with desire to seek after, and with eagerness to lay hold of, the work of the blessed Spirit. And of these three ways of considering divine truth no one can be omitted in the Church without the most serious loss. For if we confine all our thoughts to the deep mysteries of the Divine Being and counsels, we lose ourselves immediately in quietism or fatalism, and are either blinded by the darkness of too much light, or lost in the insignificance of our own being, and become indifferent to the place which solitary creatures like ourselves occupy in the evolutions of the mighty counsels of the Most High. This is the temptation and danger which most easily beset the Calvinistic school of divinity ; from which may the Lord deliver our Church, which hath never been afraid to ascend and breathe and discourse in this superior region. And, secondly, if we turn all our regards upon the revelation or manifestation of the Godhead in the person

of Jesus Christ, without contemplating the all-originating will of the Father, delighting to delineate point by point, and to wander step by step over the infinite beauties and excellences which are discoverable in the Man-God, it cometh to pass, as it were inevitably, that we fall into errors with respect to the human will,—either forget that man hath a will, or believe that the will is determined by the conviction of the mind on the affections of the heart ; whereas it is the mainspring of our being loaded with a thousand oppressions, and not capable of being extricated but by the omnipotent will of the Father, who must take off the loads and burdens and oppressions ere ever we can look at Christ, or come to Him at all. This is the temptation and the peril to which the intelligence and civilisation of a well-taught and ordered Church is liable, which always in the end draws down to the worldly system of Arminianism ; and from which I pray God to deliver the Church established in these parts, which for two centuries hath been oppressed with it, for it begins in a false idea of the liberty of the will, and it ends in the bondage of formality. And thirdly, if we direct our whole mind to the practical application of the doctrine, to the use and appropriation of it, which is eminently the idol of the Evangelical and Methodist bodies, or the religious world, and for which every man cries out in these times as the only test of right, good, and profitable preaching, it very speedily introduceth an ignorant, coarse, and homely way of religion, which never elevates the soul from its natural grovelling, but busies and bustles it with an infinitude of cares and occupations, which they teach as the only sure and safe criterion of one who is living in the fear of God. And I may devoutly pray for my flock and for myself, seeing this is the universal rage, that the Lord would teach us to be patient both of the various beauties and manifold excellences of the person of Christ, and to be devoutly and humbly prostrate before the all-comprehensive and all-unerring will of God.

Having of a long time been aware of the great importance of this point, and convinced that the scope of no truth is taken in nor the nourishment of it preached unto the mind, nor the profit of it applied to the use of holy living, until the

will of the Father in originating it, the word of the Son in revealing it, and the work of the Spirit in appropriating it, have been all duly honoured and regularly entreated, I have begun the great subject of the Divine Fatherhood by first shewing it forth to you in the eternal and essential act of the Godhead in begetting an only-begotten Son from all eternity ; which highest view of the doctrine being now both unfolded and justified from all objections, I am prepared to descend to the second level of divine discourse, and do now, in all dependence upon the Holy Spirit of grace, proceed to consider the manifestation or revelation unto the Church, and through the Church unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, of this great eternal truth, that God is a Father unto Christ, and unto all who abide in Him, or having fallen from Him are recovered to Him by the work of redemption.

Now, with respect to the manifestation unto the Church of God as a Father : if so be, as we have shewn, that His Fatherhood be not an accidental and assumed relation, but an eternal and essential part of the Divine Being derived from the eternal generation of the Son, then is it manifest that it could not be revealed before the revelation of the Son ; it is impossible that the name should be known until the truth upon which the name rested was also known. He is a Father, because He hath an only-begotten Son ; and therefore we should expect that when, in the opening of the divine purpose, the time came to reveal Messiah as the Son, and in measure as He was so revealed, would God be revealed as a Father ; and that it would remain for the complete manifestation of the Son to make the complete manifestation of the Father. And to this agrees the most peremptory testimony of Christ himself :—" No man knoweth the Son, but the Father ; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him," (Matt. xi. 27.) From this, therefore, we should expect to see the revelation of the Father and the Son make progress together in the Old Testament, and perfect themselves together in the New. Now, in pursuing this inquiry we are not called upon to shew that God never permitted Himself to be called the Father of His people, as when He sent to Pharaoh, saying, " Israel is my son,

even my first-born. Let my son go ;” nor that He should refrain Himself from such expressions of endearment as are contained in Psalm ciii.,—“ Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him ;” nor that He should not set forth the sheltering care of His providence under such expressions as these : “ A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation,” (Ps. lxviii. 5.) And yet if any one of you will take the pains to look into this subject as I have done, you will wonder how very seldom, even in the way of figurative illustration, He permits Himself to approach that blessed mystery which it was reserved for His Son to open. There are other three passages in which God unequivocally takes unto Himself the title of Father,—in the 63d and 64th chapters of Isaiah, and in the 31st of Jeremiah ; and in all these cases it is prophetic of the state of things in the latter times. So that I may say I have hardly found an instance in which God literally and plainly takes this as an appellation to Himself until the coming of Christ, after which it becomes the constant one ; and for this very reason, that it is in the Old Testament reserved as the distinction of Him that was to come. The names of God under the Old Testament were, “ The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob,” in which He separated their children for a testimony and a witness to Himself ; and upon this the nation might claim Him in a loose and popular way for their Father, as indeed they did in the presence of the Son, saying, “ We be not born of fornication, we have one Father, even God.” So the Greeks and Romans would say that they were descended from God, and call Him the Infinite Father of gods and men. But our Lord rebuked any such liberties, and said, “ If God were your Father ye would love me ; for I proceeded forth and came from God. . . . Ye are of your father the devil.” That name, “ I am the God of Abraham,” &c., also contained under it the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, the uniting of God with a man being, as it were, the pledging of the being of God for the being of that man, and equivalent to saying that Abraham should be so long as God was. For it is diligently to be observed that the name was chosen by God, not for a time, but for ever, and for a memorial, not

to the generations of the tribes of Israel, but unto all generations. And from this we further infer, not only the immortality of Abraham's being, but the superlative dignity of his person among the creatures of God ; not as being anything in himself, but as the first called of the elect Church, and the father of the faithful in Christ Jesus. Now God doth not name Himself the God of Michael the archangel, or of Gabriel, or of Raphael, but of Abraham ; in which I doubt not there is a propriety which we shall better understand in the age to come, when we shall know something of the dignity of a redeemed soul, and of the honour of the spouse of Christ. But if it is through the Church, or by means of the Church, that the principalities and powers in heavenly places are to be taught the manifold wisdom of God ; then doth it appear to me nothing wonderful that the Lord, who hath in the riches of His grace preferred us to such a high office in the age to come, should in token thereof name Himself by our name : "The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob ;" or, in other words, "the God of the elect Church," or, as it is in the text, "our God." But into this we cannot enter farther at present, without touching upon the appropriation of God as our God ; nor do we enter upon the name Jehovah, which the Lord took unto Himself when He began to prepare for entering into covenant with His people, because we hold that to be proper unto Christ, and to have been embodied into the name of Christ, "Jesus," which we shall have to consider hereafter. Now we argue that by these two names chiefly was the object of their worship known unto the tribes of Israel, and that by the name of Father He was not revealed until the revelation of His only-begotten Son. And therefore it is called, in Col. ii. 2, a mystery,—“To the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ ;” or, as the same form of words is elsewhere rendered, “the mystery of God, even the Father, and of Christ.” And how great a mystery it was is manifest from our Lord's words : “All things are delivered to me of my Father : and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father ; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him,” (Luke x. 22.) This shews

us, moreover, that the two knowledges of the Father and of the Son were inseparably interwoven together, and must come together into manifestation, and for ever remain, reflecting equal light and honour and glory, the one upon the other. And therefore it is that in the apostolic benedictions and discourses they are constantly connected with one another; and therefore the spirit of Antichrist is he that denieth the Father and the Son; and those who abide against the temptations of Antichrist are said to continue in the Son and in the Father.

Having shewn by these considerations that the proper time to look for the full manifestation of this mystery is not until the coming of the Son, we proceed to examine what dawnings there are thereof in the Old Testament. The promise made unto the woman of a seed, who should avenge their evil, and retrieve their loss, certainly seemeth to contain a hint of the mystery of God, even the Father and the Son; for why otherwise exclude Adam from all propriety in the promised seed? And I am the more convinced of this from observing that ever afterwards, unto the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, this promise of the seed was given to the man and not to the woman; and so continued until the time of Isaiah the prophet, when the mystery of a Virgin's conception began to revive the long-lost hope and honour of womanhood given in paradise. Indeed, the more I consider that state of paradise, both as it was before and after the fall, in the light of a type of Christ and His Church, the more complete does it seem to me. Before the fall, Adam was indeed the type of what Christ was in the eternal counsel to be revealed, as the Head and Lord of all. Adam, with Eve and all her children included in his side, was a notable type of what Christ was in the eternal counsel, with a Church chosen in Him from out of the apostasy which was to come in upon every form of creation. Eve, formed out of a rib from Adam's side to be his delight, was the emblem of the Church created by Christ and of Christ and for Christ. And Eve's being in the transgression, not Adam, and drawing him after her, as it would seem, out of no love to the tree, but of love to her, ("She gave unto me, and I did eat,") doth represent Christ drawn by the transgression of His spouse into the

fellowship of her low condition, suffering for her in order to restore her. And, no doubt, as it was first in the purpose it shall be in the end. That is to say, Christ and His spouse chosen in Him shall be married, and brought into the full and complete sovereignty of all the creatures of God. When I see this type of that which is to come so complete in all its parts, I have the less doubt or hesitation in believing that in the promise to the woman of a Son who should bruise the serpent's head, there is contained the first hint of the mystery that He should not come by natural generation, but by the Holy Spirit, wherefore he was called the Son of God. That destruction of the serpent's head which He was to accomplish, no doubt referreth to the destruction of death, which is the last enemy; of which victory the resurrection from the dead was the great beginning. Now, by the resurrection from the dead He was proved to be the Son of God with power; so that in this promise given to the woman of a seed, and in His destination, we find both that which afterwards entitled Him to be called the Son of God, and that which demonstrated Him before all on earth and in heaven to be actually the Son of God. But the light which shone in paradise, like the blessedness which was partaken there, was soon to be eclipsed with clouds, and broken to pieces by the dense atmosphere of sin. And from the time our first parents left the paradise of Eden, down till the time of David, we have no further hint of the mystery of the Father and the Son. But then it bursts out very brightly.

Now, before going on to examine the foreshewings of this mystery which were made unto David, I will first explain to you why I conceive there should have been so long a suppression of the light of it. We shall find that David's revelations are all concerning the bringing in of the Son, with power to inherit all people, the crowning Him as the Lord's anointed, and satisfying Him with length of days unto His mind. Many and most precious revelations also he hath of the Messiah in humility and suffering; but in this form He is never presented to us as the Son: and this with very good reason, because He was to be under a veil even to His own disciples, not one of whom can call Him Son of God but by

the Holy Ghost. If, then, it be not of God's wisdom that any one should know Him under His veil of flesh save those to whom the Father should reveal Him, it was not to be expected that by David or any of the prophets He should be known or discovered as the Son of God, except by the acts of His glorious entrance to possess the earth and inherit all nations. And this is the thing which snared the Jews, that a man who had no state, and was ambitious of none, should yet claim the name of Son of God, which they knew from the prophets was proper only to one who was God's equal, and should come in power and great glory. It maddened them therefore to fury, it made them tear their garments and cast dust upon their heads, when they heard a plain and obscure man, however blameless and worthy, assume to himself the title of Son of God, which they never found connected with humiliation or suffering, but with glory and majesty and might and Godhead. And you will see how well founded they were in this conclusion. Now, if you ask why God should so write the prophecy concerning His Son as to entrap the nation, I answer that it was that they might see and not perceive, that they might hear and not understand, that they might stumble and fall and be broken. Prophecy is always so constructed as to shed its nourishing fruits only into the lap of those who fear God, to shed its prickles and its poisons into the lap of those that fear Him not. And the natural mind, and the natural man, and the proud nation it will ever entrap, and is as much on purpose intended to entrap as it is intended of God to comfort and guide and deliver the spiritual mind, the spiritual man, and the holy nation of those who fear Him. For why? Is it not God's witness? and doth God only witness deliverance unto the righteous? doth He not also witness destruction to the wicked?

Forasmuch, then, as the prophecies which concern Messiah as the Son of God in the Old Testament have reference entirely to His mighty power, government, and dominion in the day of His second advent, it would have been out of place that they should have been exhibited to any one before the days of David, because till David's time it was not proper

to make the fulness of His glory manifest. To Abraham and the patriarchs He was known as the Son of man, their own seed; and their wandering way of life and long evil treatment did foreshadow His afflictions in the estate of humiliation. Moses's deliverance of the Church out of Egypt and conduct of them in the wilderness represented another stage of the Redeemer's work which the Church hath been accomplishing since the days of His flesh until this time, called in the Apocalypse the woman's pangs in the wilderness, and her protection therein against the power of the dragon and the beast. The time from Joshua onwards to the time of David the king doth represent the Church in her warlike condition under Joshua, that Ephraimite, whose work of clearing the land our Joshua shall yet, as I judge, fulfil by means of Ephraim and the tribes which have been so long lost from the knowledge of men. And almost all the events of the history of Gideon, and Jephthah, and Samson, and others which during this interval occurred, have a bearing less or more upon that time which is coming of the clearing out of God's enemies from the possession of His Church; as all the events in the wilderness, the rock of Meribah, the manna, the serpent on the pole, &c., have in reference to the spiritual pilgrimage of the Church. And that period of warfare includeth David in it also, who was the first to set up the line of Judah on the throne and to possess the supremacy of the sacred borders, the lot which God had divided for Himself. This strife with the enemies of the Lord being ended, we arrive at the pacific reign of Solomon, which is the true type of the Son brought into the kingdom by the Father, after He had put all His enemies under His feet. David and Solomon are therefore the true correlative types of the Father and the Son. David having obtained rest round about representeth the Father having subdued all the enemies of His Son. David transmitting the crown and sceptre in full possession unto Solomon, is the type of the Father giving unto His Son the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. As, therefore, it was proper to give unto Abraham those promises which related to a country into the possession of which his seed should bring him, and

to Moses those of a prophet who should teach the people the substance of all whereof the shadow had been given unto him, and as to Joshua and the Judges until David were given acts which are prophetic, I make no doubt, of things yet to come, when the Lord shall call for the sword of His saints; so was it proper to give unto David both the acts and the words which were proper to shadow forth the glorious conclusion and winding-up of the mystery, when the Son shall be brought in by the Father and established in peaceful sovereignty of the whole world. And now let us proceed to examine the revelations themselves, and be thankful that we shall be guided to them by the Spirit of God.

The first is that referred to by Paul in the first chapter of the Hebrews, where he reasoneth out the superiority of Christ to angels, from the consideration that He only of all creatures was called the Son; which, I may observe by the way, confirms and places beyond doubt the first observation of our discourse, that God had never permitted this name of Son to be named upon any one before Christ, but reserved it to Him only. The passage to which Paul refers in proof that God had called Him His Son, is that which was spoken unto David by Nathan, the prophet of the Lord—"I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son;" which is twice over recorded in narrative, and twice again repeated by David in commemoration; so that it occurs four times written in the Old Testament, and is made the basis of several psalms; so very extraordinary and singular a revelation did David conceive it, that any of his children should be called the son of God,—that God should be to him a Father, and that he should be unto God a son. It is written the first time in 2 Sam. vii. 14, and was given on this occasion. David had subdued the house of Saul, and received the adherence and allegiance of the tribes of Israel, and become the undisputed king over all the land; and when the Philistines had come against him, he had discomfited them at Baal-perazim, the Lord having broken out upon them there as a breach of waters, after the manner, saith Isaiah, in which He is to break forth in the latter days. Thereupon the king proceeded to bring up the ark of God with great joy unto Jeru-

salem, where they set it in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it; on which occasion Michal, Saul's daughter, was cursed with perpetual barrenness. Thus had the Lord given him rest from all his enemies round about, and permitted him to sit at peace in his own house; when he said unto Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. So Nathan said unto the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee." Then Nathan, having gone forth from the king, received that night a message from the Lord for David concerning this matter, which, after recounting God's humility in consenting to dwell in a tent, and His providence over David and his house, doth thus conclude:—"And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever." This prophecy or promise, which you will find narrated again in 1 Chron. xvii. 13, and twice over again rehearsed by David, (chap. xxii. 10, xxviii. 6,) and which Solomon, so far as the building of the house is concerned, claimeth to himself at the dedication thereof,—this prophecy, I say, is the first opening made unto any man into the mystery of the Father and the Son; and therefore it is deservedly held in great esteem. It forms the basis of the 132d and the 89th psalms, of which both the one and the other embody the very words of the prophecy. And it no doubt opened the door of the Spirit to the inditing of all those other psalms which concern the king and the king's son, as the 72d and the 21st, the 20th, the 63d, the 45th, and many others. From the bud of the same prophecy comes forth Isaiah's famous prophecy of Immanuel, which thus acknowledgeth its birth—"Of the increase of his government

and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." It is the basis, also, of the prophecy made unto the Virgin at the annunciation, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David." And it is the basis of that hope in which the council of Jerusalem rested their conclusions, when the apostle James quoted the last words of Amos the prophet,—“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this.” So that I may truly say, this word spoken unto David upon that memorable occasion was a seed out of which grew a large spreading tree; which the Spirit watered and fertilised in the Church, to her continual nourishment and consolation. The more, therefore, is it worthy of our study, as the beginning of the revelation of the mystery of God, even the Father and the Son.

It begins, you will perceive, with no admonition or indication of the long time that was to intervene between the promise and the fulfilment of the promise, save only that it was not to take place in King David's days—"when thy days shall be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers." And so also, when it was reiterated to King Ahaz by the prophet Isaiah, it bore as if it were to come to pass forthwith. And when it was given to the Virgin, it was spoken of the very child whom she was about to conceive of the Holy Ghost. Now Solomon, who was the great type of Christ, the King of Salem, which is peace, was born, as you all know, of Bathsheba, who was an adulteress, after Michal, David's royal queen, had been cursed with barrenness. And her child begotten in adultery was cut off, to the great grief of David's heart, instead of which Solomon, who was begotten in regular wedlock, was given unto him. I know not whether this doth not indicate that the present wife shall become barren, that is, the Gentile Church, and that the Jewish Church, now an

adulteress, shall bring forth some false pretender to the crown of Solomon, who shall be cut off; after which, being espoused unto God in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies, and even in faithfulness, as is promised by Hosea and all the prophets, she shall bring forth the true Solomon, or King of peace, and crown Him, according to that which is written in the Song of their celestial nuptials, "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart." To those who have studied the events of the Old Testament as Paul seems to have done, this will appear more definite still, when it is remembered that Michal was the daughter of Saul, whom the Philistines smote, though the anointed of the Lord, and that it was at the time of the bringing of the ark up to Jerusalem, before building for it the temple. And to those who have only studied the Scriptures intellectually, or, as they term it, practically, but, as I term it, incredulously, it will appear a fancy and a notion which should never be brought into the pulpit. And so I proceed with my exposition. "I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom." To us, looking backward, it is very manifest that this was not fulfilled in Solomon, whose throne, so far from being established, was subverted immediately upon his death. Nor was it fulfilled in the line of Judah's kings, whose throne was subverted by Nebuchadnezzar; since which time the tabernacle and the throne of David have been cast down into the dust; of which David had a prophetic intimation in the 89th Psalm, when, after making mention of this blessed promise, he lamenteth over God's severity, and saith, (verse 44,) "Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground. The days of his youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered him with shame." And how little it was fulfilled to the Virgin, who beheld her Son nailed to the cross, we all do well know. Yet, brethren, notwithstanding this appeareth clear to us, looking back upon it, it did not so appear, nor was it intended so to appear, unto them who looked forward, but it was intended to stand really and truly as a promise, which would have

been fulfilled unto their faithfulness and obedience. And had Solomon continued to fear the Lord, instead of going apostate after every strange god, the abomination of the Sidonians and the Philistines, and the gods of Egypt; and had not his posterity of David's line sinned beyond all repentance or remission or redemption, they would have had it fulfilled: for did not the Lord command Jeremiah to say unto the last of David's line, and to all the people,—“Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. For if ye do this thing indeed, then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people.” And it is added in another place, (ch. xvii. 25,) “And this city shall remain for ever.” And many things more of infinite promise are made to depend in that place upon their merely hallowing the Sabbath. And in like manner our Lord cried out to Jerusalem, in the language which had been prophesied of the Shiloh, “How oft would I have gathered thee as a hen doth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!” which is an example of what we said above, that the prophecy is so contrived of God as to be a gin and a snare unto the wicked and the disbeliever, and every form of the natural understanding; while to the righteous and the believer, and every form of the spiritual understanding, it is a support and nourishment, while in the end it unfailingly accomplisheth the purpose of God. If I could but teach this lesson to the wise and witty church of this generation, I would not this day have preached in vain. Seeing, then, the prophecy was not fulfilled in times past, it remaineth to be fulfilled assuredly of David's seed in the time which is to come. “He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.” This Solomon did not, else would his throne not now be cast unto the ground; for he that built that house was to be established in his kingdom for ever: nor for the same reason was it Zerubbabel, who built the second temple. It remains, therefore, that Christ should build a house for the name of the Lord, concerning which this

is not the place to discourse particularly ; only I may say in passing, that this same temple is described by Ezekiel with all its appurtenances and ordinances of worship ; it is also spoken of by the prophet Haggai in these words, which St Paul applieth to a time future, (Hag. ii. 6, 7, 9,)—"Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land : and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come : and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former, saith the Lord of hosts : and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." As usual, the language is so constructed as to apply to the temple which Haggai prophesied of, and to which the Lord did in deed and in truth come. But then He did not give peace, and its glory was not so great as that of the former house. But, as I said, it settles all controversy to know that the apostle refers the whole to a time future to the former coming of the Lord. The same do I say of the passage of Mal. iii. 1, 2, where it is said, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me ; and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple." But while I thus maintain the truth of this prediction by the parallel passages of Scripture, that the children of Israel shall have a temple as surely as David shall have a throne,—the former the guarantee of the latter,—I do never for a moment doubt that the Lord is fashioning and preparing each one of us living stones to be built up a spiritual house for a habitation of God by the Spirit ; as it is written, "whose house are ye, if ye hold fast the beginning of your confidence to the end ;" into which spiritual temple, or New Jerusalem above, every one of the believers in Christ since the beginning of the world hath been gathered, and which shall come down from heaven as the bride, the Lamb's wife. But this doth not by any means prejudice the literal accomplishment of those prophecies unto Israel and the inhabitants of all the earth, which up to this time nothing hath prejudiced, and to the end of time nothing can or shall prejudice for ever. There had always been these two things in the world—a visible church, now constituted in a family, now in a nation, and now in a confraternity of all kind-

reds and tongues, united by oneness of faith and baptism ; and an invisible or elect church, continually gathering out of the former, but known only to God, and essentially hidden from the discernment of men. And these two will continue in the world after the coming of Christ, with these two differences : first, that the visible church shall now include the whole earth, with Jerusalem as its metropolis, the temple in Jerusalem as its shrine, and the Lord of hosts in that temple as the object of universal worship, insomuch " that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain." And this is the temple which the Son of David who is to reign for ever shall build unto the name of the Lord, where He shall inhabit and reign for ever. The second difference is, that the church invisible, which hath been gathering under the dispensation of gracious promise, shall now become visible when that New Jerusalem cometh down from heaven in which there is no temple, and the tabernacle of God is with men ; or in other words, when Christ cometh with all His saints. It is to the real worldly Jerusalem, the habitation of men who are born and die, that the passage before us adverteth, and indeed that all prophecy adverteth in the first instance, though no prophecy telleth out its burden, or accomplisheth its meaning save in the latter, that is, the glorified condition of the saints ; which truly is the end of all revelation, the object of all predictions, the consummation of all dispensations, and the exposition of all types and symbols. So that this our glorious hope liveth not by dissolving the letter of any prophecy, or evacuating the meaning of every type, but by preserving all the things which God hath given to represent and prefigure it, and using them all in the interpretation of the same. Now that there will be a real Jerusalem on the earth, such a city, only more pure and holy, as we now behold cities on the earth, I believe ; and that there will be a temple in that Jerusalem, because of which kings shall bring presents into them, I truly believe ; while at the same time I believe there will be a New Jerusalem with no temple but the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb. And now we come to the promise itself, which more especially concerneth the subject

into which we inquire,—“I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son.”

This promise is applied by David unto his son Solomon in the double rehearsal which he maketh of it in 1 Chron. xxii. and xxviii. ; and doubtless Solomon was intended in it, as Isaac was in the seed promised unto Abraham. But as Paul (Gal. iii. 16) asserteth that Christ in His humility was the very seed then spoken of by the Spirit of prophecy, “He saith not, And to seeds, as of many ; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ ;” so likewise (Heb. i. 5) doth he, without any argument of any kind, but as a matter acknowledged on all hands, even by those with whom he disputed, apply this prophecy unto Christ in the same breath in which he applies that of Psalm ii., as if these two stood forth with equal prominence, —“Unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee ? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son.” And to Christ alone, as we have already seen, will the particulars of the prophecy apply. Nevertheless that Solomon had the foretaste of it all, and was raised up to personify that part of Messiah’s incommunicable fulness, which concerneth His kingdom and His manifest divinity as the Son of God, there can be no doubt ;—that even as the word spoken by God unto Himself, “Let us make man,” first constituted Adam, though intended ultimately for Christ ; and as the word spoken unto Abraham, “I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee,” did first constitute Isaac, though intended ultimately for Christ,—so this word given to David first constituted the wisdom, and the dignity, and the infinite wealth, the renown, and the glory, and the perfect peace of Solomon’s kingdom, though intended ultimately for Christ, in whom alone it ever can be fulfilled in all or any one of its parts. This surely no one will doubt, seeing the Lord hath signified it by His Holy Spirit unto His servant Paul. Taking it for granted, therefore, that no one doubts the application of the Holy Ghost, let us now proceed to examine and set forth what insight is hereby given us into the mystery of the Father and the Son, concerning which we discourse.

I have said that this is the first place in which the mystery of the Father and the Son was revealed unto the Church ; and from henceforth it began to be known that Messiah was to be the Son of God. From Abraham down to this time He was known only as the promised seed, who should possess the gate of His enemies, and in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. But there was no promise that God should be to Him a Father, and that He should be to God as a Son. All that was spoken unto Abraham appertained unto the man of war, the heroic conqueror of all the enemies of the chosen people, and the establishing of their universal dominion upon the earth ; of all which Joshua and David, with the judges who intervened between them, do all, taken together, constitute the type,—indicating, as we have said, that period of the war of the great day of God Almighty, which will precede the enthronation of Messiah as the peaceful Solomon, the Melchizedek, the King of Salem, and the Prince of Peace. And in order to mark how different in kind, and how much more exalted before God is the functions of our Messiah as the Solomon above His functions as the Joshua and the David, we have David expressly undervalued and slighted of God, and prevented from building His temple, for this very reason, that he had fulfilled the function of a man of war. “ But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood,” (1 Chron. xxviii. 3.) From which I judge that the manifestation of Christ as the El-Gebor, or God-hero, in that office described in Psalm xlv., will be very different from and inferior to His manifestation as the Melchizedek or Prince of Peace, which is described in Psalm xlvii., and the last character of His name given by Isaiah,—“ His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Father of Eternity, the Mighty God, [or the God-hero,] and the Prince of Peace.” And to this perhaps the scene which took place between Abraham and Melchizedek, when Abraham returned from the slaughter of the kings, may have a reference, seeing Paul reasons largely upon it in the Hebrews as a typical event. Chedorlaomer, whom he overcame, was the great monarch, the head of the confederate kings of that day, and he had dominion over Sodom and the cities of

the plain. Now Sodom in the Apocalypse is one of the names given to the mystical Babylon, over which the infidel king hath already had the supremacy : they are at present escaped out of his dominion, as was Sodom ; against which being again raised up, and having subdued and made them captives,—which we are told the second infidel king, who is the eighth head and also of the seven, is to do by the mystical Babylon,—Abraham, for the sake of Lot, whom they also had captive, is now stirred up, and with his household, whom he had well trained in war, and with his confederates, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, went forth against those victorious kings, whom the Lord gave as the dust to his sword and as driven stubble to his bow. This we know the Lamb and those who are with Him are to do to that infidel king, when He shall have subverted the mystical Sodom, and be exalted very high over all the earth. Thus far the type is perfect ; now what follows is expressly declared by Paul to be emblematical of the dignity of Christ's kingly and priestly offices : “Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine ; and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth ; and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he [Abraham] gave him tithes of all.” This acknowledgment of his inferiority to Melchizedek, notwithstanding all his conquests, notwithstanding he possessed the promises, this bestowal of the tithe of all the spoils upon him in return for his blessing, doth shew me that Messiah, when He shall have fully attained unto the possession of all that is promised to Him as Abraham's seed, and fulfilled the promises made unto Abraham's children, doth then enter into a higher and more glorious office, as the Solomon, or the Melchizedek, or the Prince of Peace,—the former being the summit of His dignity as the manifest Son of man, the latter the beginning of His dignity as the manifest Son of God.

For the more perfect clearing up of this, that Abraham possessed only the promise of the seed in His manifestation as the Son of man, including His future manifestation as the conqueror of His enemies, and that for David was reserved the promise of the seed in His manifestation as the Son of

God, I would a little examine the history and conditions of Isaac, the confirmatory type yielded to the one, and of Solomon, the confirmatory type yielded to the other. The first event recorded in Isaac's life is Abraham's being commanded to offer him for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains in the land of Moriah, where the temple was afterwards built by Solomon. We have indeed no divine warrant in applying this as a type, but it seemeth a most striking one of the sacrifice of Christ, the promised seed, by His Father, in demonstration of His great love with Him freely to give us all things. The next event is his marriage to Rebekah, who, not by course of nature, but in answer to prayer and faith, as in the case of Sarah, conceived twins in her womb, of whom Esau, the first-born, was by the Lord's response appointed to serve Jacob the younger. I think we have a divine warrant to interpret this emblematically, both from the apostle's example and from his precept—his example, as recorded in the 4th chapter of Galatians and the 9th chapter of the Romans; his precept, as recorded in the 12th chapter of the Hebrews. In the first of these places, the Holy Spirit declareth to us that Abraham's bondwoman Hagar signified the covenant made at Sinai, and still subsisting in the Jerusalem which then was, and which with her children was soon cast out; that Sarah, his wife, signified the new Jerusalem which is above, and of which Christ was the first seed, and of which all that are in Christ are also the children. For, saith he, she is the mother of us all, who are but pilgrims seeking our way back again to her, and to be manifested along with her in her glory. This is sufficient to shew us that the covenant of Sinai and the Jerusalem which was cast out have nothing to do with Isaac the son of Sarah, but with Hagar the bondwoman. To the same effect, in the 9th of the Romans, he argues that they are not all Israel who are of Israel, and that it was not by a fleshly generation, but by a spiritual generation, that the true Israel were produced. "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son;" meaning that the

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promise of God, the will of God, and nothing else, placed a difference in the beginning between Sarah's son and Hagar's son and all the other sons of Abraham, though they were equally of his seed, and therein arguing that God was doing so still in that sifting of Israel which was then taking place. And the more to confirm this great doctrine of God's will being the only law of God's proceedings, he addeth the instance of Rebekah, concerning which we now treat, saying, "And not only this; but when Rebekah also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac, (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." His placing the case of Isaac's two children in Rebekah's womb, beside that of Abraham's children by several wives, which we know to be emblematical, gives ground for strong suspicion that the other is also emblematical of the relative dignity of the two children which should be brought forth to Isaac. And this suspicion is confirmed into a belief in the third passage referred to, in the 12th chapter of the Hebrews, when the apostle, speaking to the Christian Church, sets forth Esau's selling his birthright as our warning not to part with our birthright, threatening that if we do we shall not recover it again (verses 16-18) — "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest. . . . But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than

that of Abel." If the Christian Church be not the Esau with the birthright, and doomed to lose his birthright for his fornication and profanity, that is, his idolatry and infidelity, there would have been little propriety in the reference to Esau; and then the reason assigned for our not receiving it when it should be lost, is that we are children not of the bondwoman Hagar, but of the new Jerusalem above, which is the mother of us all: that is, not of the covenant of bondage, which is Hagar, but of the covenant of liberty, which is Sarah. And how doth this deprive us of the power of recovery and repossession? Because these children of Hagar, those Jews after the flesh, have a promise of repossession, but we have none. They were only brought to the Jerusalem on earth, and have yet the Jerusalem above to be brought to; of which we being now entered freemen, if we fall away, there is then no room left us for repentance, there is no second sacrifice for sin. Finding this use made of Rebekah's two children, if not absolutely emblematical of two churches, or states of the Church, yet certainly in the closest connexion with emblems thereof, we have little hesitation in understanding Paul to imply that they are to be looked upon as emblematical of the Gentile Church that now is and of the Jewish Church which is yet to be. And if any one ask why Paul did not speak out more plainly, we answer that there is the same veil continually drawn over the termination of the Gentile and the recalling of the Jewish Church through all his writings. Whether it was not clearly revealed by the Spirit unto his mind, or whether the Spirit was pleased for the encouragement of the infant Church not to present its disastrous termination in all its shame and horror, the conclusion from the whole would be, that Isaac, or the seed promised to Abraham, is to be the father of two children, the first-born of whom is Esau or the Gentile Church, the Edom of the Old Testament, the younger of whom is Jacob, the father of the Jews; that the former should sell his birthright for sensual gratification and unsettled profane practices, and the latter should come into the possession of it, and have the dominion over his brother.

In confirmation of my position, it is further to be observed that the promise to Abraham did not contemplate the dignity

of a king in that seed which was to be given to him, but only of a Blessed One who should be a blessing unto all nations. And when the seed of Abraham murmured and desired to have a king, the Lord punished them with the dominion of Saul the Benjamite, whom He afterwards took away in His wrath. Then He constituted David their king, and brought him into the kingdom with infinite labours and perils from the hand of Saul. This was an addition to the former revelation; it was a new disclosure of the divine purpose, which was introduced by the hand of Samuel, who wrote the manner of the kingdom in a book, as Moses had written before him the manner of the priesthood. And thus that was presented under different emblems which in the time of Abraham was united in one in the person of Melchizedek. And this is the reason why until the time of David you find no prophecies of Messiah as the King; but thereafter hardly one prophecy, whether in the psalms or in the prophets, which doth not present Him as such. These two things, therefore, we consider as established: that till the time of David Messiah was not announced as the Son of God; that till the time of David Messiah was not announced as a King; and from this time forth we shall find Him presented as both together. Besides the passage under consideration, we shall point out to you several to the same effect.

And first, let me direct your attention to the 2d Psalm, which may be considered as the fullest enlargement of the mystery of the Father and the Son contained in the Old Testament, and which is continually referred to as such in the New Testament, from the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost, even until the coming of the Lord as a man of war in the Apocalypse. In the 4th chapter of the Acts the apostles apply the first two verses of it thus: "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles [or heathen], and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." But they go no further with the application of it. The 4th and the 5th verses were not applicable then, because the time was not yet come for speaking to the kings in His wrath and

vexing them in His sore displeasure. Not but that there hath been a dispensation of divine wrath and vexation against the kings of the earth, wherever there has been a combination and confederacy against the Lord and His Anointed ; but as the combination and confederation is yet unbroken, is indeed yet uncompleted, and hath not yet gone the length of saying, " Let us break their bands asunder, and cast their cords from us ;" so the day of wrath was then future, and is, though begun, in its heaviest and darkest downfallings still future. But more evidence will be seen of this as we proceed. Nor is the time of the 6th verse arrived when Jehovah shall set His King upon His holy hill of Zion, nor will be until the manifestation of Christ as King. And then shall the decree be declared,—“ Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” The placing of Christ as King upon Zion’s holy hill is the time of His manifestation as the Son of God. For thus are these three times in Scripture connected with Christ as the Son of God : First, His conception by the power of the Holy Ghost entitled Him to be called the Son of God ; secondly, His resurrection from the dead proved Him to be the Son of God ; thirdly, His being placed King upon the holy hill of Zion shall manifest Him to be the Son of God, or shall reveal the decree made from eternity. In that day His true generation shall be declared by the worship of the angels and the kings of the earth, according as it is written in the 97th Psalm, and applied to Him by the apostle in the 1st chapter of the Hebrews,—“ And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God [or let all the gods] worship him.” That this declaration of the everlasting decree is still future is manifest from this same ground, that the remaining verses of the psalm are promised by the Lord in the 2d chapter of the Apocalypse against a future time, called the end, which is so remarkable a passage that I shall quote it:—“ And he that overcometh, and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations : and he shall rule them with a rod of iron ; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers ; even as I received of my Father.” Here Christ represents Himself as having already received it,—no doubt at His ascension into

glory,—and as being about to impart the fellowship of it to every one who overcometh ; but in the psalm as not yet having declared or heralded it abroad as a King. So in the 19th chapter of the Apocalypse, where He is introduced a second time into the world, it is said “that He shall smite the nations, and shall rule them with a rod of iron ;” —than which no more clearer demonstration could be given by the Holy Spirit of the time of the declaration of the decree, “Thou art mine only-begotten Son : this day have I begotten thee.” That declaration which was made to His Church of His being the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead, shall now be made unto the whole earth by the manifestation of His power and glory ; and every one who will not bow down to Him shall be made to lick the dust. And so the psalm concludes,—“Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings ; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss ye the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.” Such is the full opening of the mystery of Christ’s being the only-begotten contained in the 2d Psalm.

From this we pass onward to the 89th Psalm, which may be considered as a still fuller commentary upon the passage under consideration, taking in not only the promise, “I will be his Father, and he shall be my son,” but also the threatening,—“If he commit iniquity, I will chastise him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men. But my mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.” The 89th Psalm is nothing but a prophetic enlargement and divine exposition of this promise and threatening. It begins with an exaltation of the faithfulness of the Lord, spoken, as I judge, by the Messiah, who, beholding the purpose of His Father disclosing itself in the royal vocation of David and everlasting establishment of his seed, doth celebrate His Father’s faithfulness to the covenant made between them in the counsels of eternity. For the ground of the exaltation is this : “I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all

generations." Then the high and holy strain gloweth on to the celebration of God's righteousness and power, until, at the 19th verse, it returneth again to that very glorious and gracious act which moved the strain of praise: "Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant: with my holy oil have I anointed him. . . . The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. . . . I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. . . . His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." It is manifest from every word of this quotation, as indeed it is from the whole psalm, that David here standeth for the Son of David, the only Holy One, the only Christ or Anointed One, the only one upon whom the enemy was not able to exact; the first who cried unto God, Thou art my Father; the first-born or first-begotten from the dead, who is to be made higher than the kings of any land. Just as Jacob in the 24th Psalm is used for Christ, and Israel in the 49th of Isaiah, and Solomon in the 3d chapter of the Song; so here David is used for Him, or rather for the seed of David terminating in Him, as it is also in the 3d of Hosea, the 37th of Ezekiel, and various other parts of Scripture. I said the seed of David terminating in Him, because it is the manner of prophecy not to overleap the intervening space, as it were, with a bound, but to be so worded as that it shall contain exhortation and admonition, promise and threatening, to every time intervening; being not solely for any age past nor solely for any age to come; of no private interpretation, but co-extensive in its application with the existence of the Church. Behold, then, here a prophecy given to the seed-royal of David, expressly for their warning and consolation as being the royal family of Christ, and terminating in Christ, the great cause and end of their exaltation above the families of Israel. This is necessary to understand that clause in the text—"But if he commit iniquity, I will chastise him with the

rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men." Hear now how this is expanded in the 30th, 31st, and 32d verses of the Psalm—"If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes." And so on, exactly parallel with Nathan's prophecy, proceedeth the psalmist's strain. Saith the prophet, "But my mercy shall not depart from him;" that is, the seed or son of David who is to build the temple and establish his throne for ever. Saith the psalmist, "Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." From this part unto the end the psalmist recounts in the spirit of prophecy the wrath of God with the seed of David, the profaning of his crown, and the casting down of his throne unto the dust; and, in the weariness of his heart, complains unto God, and asketh "How long, Lord? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?" And that this long and patient endurance of suffering is Christ's also, who bore all the griefs and sufferings of His people, and is the end of all the prophecies of suffering as well as those of glory, is manifest from the concluding verses—"Lord, where are thy former loving-kindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy truth? Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people; wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O Lord; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed." Such is the burden of a psalm, perhaps the most comprehensive in the whole canon in respect to the royal office of the Son, setting forth the sufferings and humiliation, the long prostration and trampling under foot of His dignity, the certainty of His power and glory, the universality and eternity of His dominions, and all upon the earth, among the rivers, and by the sea. We have seen the fulfilment of the

former part upon the earth, and upon the earth only ; for in heaven I well do wit His royal honours have suffered no tarnish, nor His kingly office any insult or injury ; but upon the earth His crown hath been profaned by being cast unto the ground, His hedges have been broken down, and His strongholds have been brought to ruin, and the right hand of His adversaries has been set up, and all His enemies have been made to rejoice. This certainly, to the fullest extent, hath been accomplished here on earth. Since the time that Jesus called God His Father, and asserted in the presence of Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judea, that He was King of the Jews, the kings of the earth have combined against Him, and they have set up a usurper of His dominions, and they have perverted His servants, and they have prevailed to make His glory to cease, and have cast the throne of David to the ground. For almost three thousand years have they prevailed against the Anointed of the Lord. David hath suffered affliction in the humiliation of David's line for that long period of time. One whirlwind of fury after another has swept over his inheritance until this day. And what ? Shall it aye be so ? Shall the burden of glory and power which is heaped upon his head never come ? Shall his throne, which tottered under Solomon, and fell into two pieces under Rehoboam, and sunk into the dust under Jehoiakim,—since which time, that is, two thousand five hundred years ago, it hath been profaned,—shall it then not be established again ? Shall it not be established for ever ? Where, then, is God's faithfulness, and what is become of the covenant which He made with His Holy One ? And how is David's throne established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven ? I dare not believe such things, which God's word so mightily repugneth. I dare hardly think them, and it almost repenteth me to have worded them, though in the strongest disbelief and detestation of such shocking contradictions of God's promise and falsification of His testimony.

The next and only other psalm which I shall quote at present in illustration of the point under consideration is the 132d, which seems to have been composed upon the occasion of bringing the ark of the covenant up into the temple at Jeru-

salem ; perhaps given unto David with a view to that high solemnity, or to Solomon upon the very occasion of it. It begins by recalling to the Lord the remembrance of David and all his afflictions, and his pious zeal and resolution to build a house for the Lord, and a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob ; touching, as he passeth, the Lord's providence over it when it fell into the hands of the Philistines. "Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah : we found it in the fields of the wood." Then the strain ascendeth into prayer and invocation—"Arise, O Lord, into thy rest ; thou, and the ark of thy strength. Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness ; and let thy saints shout for joy. For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed ;" that is Solomon in the first instance. Then the psalm proceedeth to recount the promise made unto David by the mouth of Nathan the prophet—"The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David ; he will not turn from it : Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne. If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore." Thus far we have applied the psalm unto Solomon and unto David, but only in a typical sense. For the sufferings of David which God is called upon to remember, are the sufferings of a Greater than David ; of whose sufferings David's indeed were a part, as are those of every saint, but compared with His only as the drop which came out of the ocean is to the ocean of waters from whence it came. Neither was that temple which David prepared, and which Solomon prevailed to build, God's rest for ever ; nor was Solomon that fruit of David's body who should sit upon his throne for evermore. These things are either false or foolish exaggerations which no believer will endure, or they remain to be fulfilled in a greater King than Solomon and a more lasting temple than Solomon's. And that the whole psalm, like every other prophecy, is, in spirit and truth, the testimony of Jesus, is further manifest from the remainder of it, which is a great and glorious and abiding benediction upon Zion, which, though it was given of old, hath not yet begun to have its fulfilment, nor will, until the dedication of that temple which the true seed of David is to build. "For

the Lord hath chosen Zion ; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever : here will I dwell ; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision : I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation : and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. There will I make the horn of David to bud : I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed. His enemies will I clothe with shame : but upon himself shall his crown flourish."

Thus these psalms, dear brethren, are enough for our present purpose of unfolding to you the condition in which the Church of bondage stood with respect to this doctrine of freedom—the doctrine of God as our Father ; and how their bondage consisted in this very thing, that they durst consider themselves only as servants : that prerogative of a son being defined and restricted as the special possession and single prerogative of the royal seed of David, in whom all these great and mighty things were to be accomplished. With these psalms as your guide, you might go over the whole collection, and marking off those which relate to the King and the King's Son, you would find what a body of prophecy and what a continuance of praise flowed from this germ which was planted in the soul of David by Nathan the prophet, and watered there by the Holy Spirit. You may then take up the Song of Solomon, and open it with the same key, as the mystery of the marriage of the King with His Church. From thence you may proceed through the prophets and mark off those which speak of David, and the stem of Jesse, as the king upon Zion, and the ruler of all the earth. And you will yet wonder more what infinite fruits grew from this seed which was planted in the Church in the time of David ; which, as I have said, I consider to be only paralleled by the promise given to Abraham, and repeated unto Isaac and Jacob.

Now, brethren, this rudimental prediction of Nathan, out of which grew the word of the kingdom of Christ, being given to Him as a Son, from God as His Father, you can easily understand how the sonship and kingdom were fast riveted together in the hope of the Church ; so that whenever they read a prediction of the King, they applied it to the Son. And this is the true reason why our Lord durst hardly,

save with the utmost caution, take upon Himself the name of the Son of God, because, when He once upon a time did it, the people seized every one a stone to stone Him, because, being a man, He made Himself equal to God ; and when He did another time, before the high priest and the elders, he rent his garments, and they all with one consent cried out, "He blasphemeth ; He is worthy of death." For why ? Because they had connected this name of Son with that mighty Prince whom they expected as a King, a King of glory, with a charge for the gathering together of the people, to make them glorious unto the ends of the earth. That this was really the case, that they connected the title Son of God with all these divine and Godlike functions of the King, is not only clear from the derivation of the regal prophecies, but it is placed beyond a doubt by the apostle's method of reasoning with the Jews in the first chapter of the Hebrews, when he quotes from no less than four different psalms—the 97th, the 45th, the 102d, and the 110th—passages which were by his enemies applied unto the Son, though in none of them is Messiah mentioned at all by the designation of Son ;—which shews us that the Jews made it a rule of interpretation, that those passages which spoke of Messiah in His mighty power were proper to the Son of God ; or, in one word, that from the days of David He began to be expected as the Son of God ; whereas I believe till that time He was not looked for, nor could be looked for, as anything higher than the Son of man.

And the practical use of the whole, brethren, is, to fill our hearts with that wonder and admiration which swelled the breast of the apostle John when he exclaimed, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God : therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is," (1 John iii. 1.) The wonder is, that every Christian should stand on the height of that elevation, on which pinnacle stood the long-expected Messiah of the Jews. This is the mystery of His love and power, that

to us which believe He giveth power to become the sons of God ; and if sons, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. If we possess the highest title, of sons of God, which the Jews esteemed it blasphemy in Him to use, do we not much more possess the lower fellowship of prophets, priests, and kings ? If prophets, or witnesses of His holy truth, then let us know it all, and believe it all, and prophesy or forth-shew it all ; if priests, or companions of His martyrdom,—priests under Him, presenting our bodies a living sacrifice,—then let us not shrink from bearing His cross, and submitting to His crucifixion, and offering ourselves upon the altar of His divinity ; if kings, and heirs of His crown, and throne, and kingdom upon the earth, then let us not permit any man to say that there is to be no kingdom, nor throne, nor crown upon the earth ; suffer not the unbelief of such men to take your crown. Talk of His kingdom one with another, and rejoice for the day of His proclamation from the top of Zion, and for the promulgation of the decree, “Thou art mine only-begotten Son ; this day have I begotten thee.” Abide steadfast in these the immunities and rights of the sons of God, into which Christ the quickening Spirit hath begotten every one of you by the Holy Ghost. Oh, be not faithless, but believing ! We are arrived at the edge of the promised land, and a day of provocation is at hand. Oh, harden not your hearts, as in the day of provocation ! If ye will not believe, ye shall not, ye cannot be established. Blessed are they who believe, with Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, that the Lord is able to cast out the Philistines and Anakims who at present usurp and destroy the earth. They shall surely have a good and satisfying portion in the inheritance ; and those that will not believe may chance to perish in the wilderness, and not be permitted to enter in at all.

But here, dear brethren, we must stop for the present. I trust you are not impatient of these inquiries into the word of God ; for there is no other way to come at the thing which is revealed but by studying the revelation. While we inquired into the mystery of the eternal generation of the Son, as it is of the essence of the Godhead, and justified its importance

and its truth, we were at more liberty to launch out into the liberties of discourse ; but, now that we are searching into a point of revelation, we are bound down, and must proceed by the way of the Spirit, which is by comparing spiritual things with spiritual. And when we come to the appropriation of the doctrine, then also we come closer and nearer to the hearts of men. But, if we will not be patient to examine what is written, our discourse of the Divine nature and decrees will be only theological speculation, and our discourse of personal application will only be superficial appeals to feeling, striking declamation, formal rules, without either wisdom or strength to keep them, or, finally, some of the infinite forms of self-righteousness or justification by works. I should be sorry, therefore, dear brethren, for your own sakes, that you should be impatient, or regard as impractical these inquiries into the progress and properties of the Divine Spirit in revealing such a mighty truth as the Fatherhood of God ; but for my part, my duty is defined, and my purpose taken, as I was earnest to justify, so now to be patient to ascertain the revelation of this great name of God, "our Father." For, brethren, it may tend a little to exalt the blessing we have in Christ for our prophet, and the prerogative we have in Christ for our intercessor, when we perceive the great and precious burden of truth which He brought, and the light which He cast over the being of God. And what is that light, and what is that burden ? It is chiefly, if not wholly, contained in that word "Our Father," with which the Lord's prayer openeth. That ye might know God as your Father, was also the cause of His humiliation unto the death ; that ye might enjoy Him as your Father, is the perfection of the Spirit's work. To be His child, to obey and love Him as our Father, that is the perfection of a Christian. And shall we not be glad to know how we came by degrees to this blessed privilege and prerogative ? If nations look back to the epochs at which they received this and that blessing of their constitution, as, for example, to the Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights, should not we Christians be glad to look back to the times and circumstances under which we received more and more of that blessed constitution of divine knowledge under which we live ?

I feel assured that ye are so ; and if ye have been carried away by the flimsy speech tickling the ear and ruffling the feelings, ye are disposed to revert to a more deep, patient, intelligent, and wholesome manner of discourse, such as I have been this day seeking to exemplify. And, O dear brethren, when you see the conjunction of blessed circumstances under which David received this prophecy, the great price at which he set it, and how he sung it in his many psalms, and magnified, and over again magnified, the blessedness of Solomon, the king who was to possess it, oh, what thanksgivings ought we to pay, what gladness to exult withal, what blessedness to feel, and what love to repay, when we know that each of us can say,—“ He is my Father, and I am His son. But I was free-born to this privilege. I inherited it from the faith of my father. God permitted His name—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—to be named on me ; and I am His child no less—the child of the Most High God ? ” Ah ! beloved, such ought to be our feelings of joy in looking back to our privileges in Christ. If I shall have taught you to say “ Our Father ” with a fuller heart and tenderer love, then, verily, I have not opened this subject in vain.

## XX.

### GOD OUR FATHER.

EPH. I. 2.

*God our Father.*

THE point of doctrine which I have been examining is the gradual introduction into the world, or rather into the Church, of the doctrine of God's Fatherhood unto His people, which entitles them to be called sons of God; not the loose and popular application of the term Father unto God, which almost all nations, less or more, have by a natural similitude applied to Him who is the Creator and Preserver of everything which hath a being, but the appropriation of it to Himself as the name which it hath pleased Him to take towards all who believe in the name of His only-begotten Son, and which entitles them to take unto themselves as their proper designation the name of "the sons of God;" which, brethren, I cannot find permitted unto or appropriated by any of the angelic orders, but expressly prohibited to them who may aspire no higher than to be ministering spirits unto the heirs of salvation. From our inquiry into the gradual discovery of this glorious light unto the sons of men, it hath appeared that so far from being permitted to any of the saints before the incarnation to call themselves sons of God, it was in the most solemn and circumstantial way promised unto David as the high and holy distinction of his seed who should build the temple of God, and sit upon the throne of David for ever and ever. By which appropriation of the title unto Messiah, it was enshrined most sacredly, and interdicted most fearfully, from the ambition, and even from the imagination of all other

men. It was shut up and seven times sealed, when it was forestalled unto Christ in that way which we shewed from the original promise, and from the 2d and 89th Psalms; in the former of which, to make it utterly impossible for any prince, or priest, or prophet to claim upon the title, He is called the Son—"Kiss the Son;" and it is put forth as the decree of God, "I will declare the decree, Thou art my Son." They might be called gods, ("I said ye are gods,") but they might not be called "Son of God:" but to Him who could make that title His own, they were to bow the knee—"Worship him, ye gods." But while this sacred distinction is so barred and fenced, it is implied, I think, in the word used in the 89th Psalm, "I will make him my first-born," that He was to have a numerous seed or brotherhood, which should enter by His right into the inheritance, and be adopted for His sake. These are known in the prophecy sometimes by the name of His seed, as in Isaiah liii. 10, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed;" sometimes by the name of His brethren, as in Isaiah viii. 18, "Behold I and the brethren whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel." And in that same strain of prophecy He is named the Father, "the everlasting Father," or the Father of eternity. These all do confirm the conclusion which we have come to, that He and He only was "the Son of God" under the former dispensation, and that all who should be advanced unto the liberty of children should owe it to Him.

In what condition, then, was the former Church? In the condition, not of free-born children, but in the condition of bondsmen and slaves. There was no liberty nor adoption into the family till the Son was manifested, and then they whom He made free were free indeed; there was no power in visible existence which could make us children until He came unto His own, and His own received Him not; but unto as many as received Him gave He power to become the sons of God. Till then there was nothing but beggarly bondage in the Church; "a yoke which," saith James, "neither we nor our fathers were able to bear." But the yoke which the Son proffered unto men was easy, and His burden was

light ; because it was the yoke of love and liberty and affection, which a son beareth under a father. If any one doubt that the true condition of the former Church was that of bondsmen or slaves, and that they knew nothing whatever of our liberty in Christ, let him study along with me what the apostle teacheth in Gal. iv. 22, "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons ; the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh ; but he of the freewoman was by promise." That is, Ishmael, who was the son of Hagar, Abraham's bond-slave, was born according to nature ; but Isaac against or above nature, by the virtue and power of the Divine promise. "Which things are an allegory : for these are the two covenants ; the one from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to the Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not ; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not : for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless, what saith the scripture ? Cast out the bondwoman and her son : for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." Abraham is here represented in the light of a father to all the Church, as Adam was the father of all men. Hagar, the mother of her son Ishmael, is interpreted to be the covenant of Sinai ; that is, the law of Moses and the city of Jerusalem, which were still in being when the apostle wrote. And Hagar being a bondwoman gendered to bondage, means that her son had no rights as a son to any inheritance. Ishmael was in this respect in the exact condition of Keturah's children, whom Abraham sent away from his house with each a gift, that they might not dispute the inheritance with Isaac the lawful heir. In like manner, argueth the apostle, all who had been

born of the covenant made at Sinai, and all who were then under the worship of the temple in Jerusalem, were bondsmen, not free to inherit anything. The mother and the children are both in bondage—"which is in bondage with her children." And having none of the rights of sons, they were denied the name of sons. They were permitted to remain in the house, but had not the countenance of a father lifted upon them, but the stern aspect of a lord and master. The names of Baalim were not yet taken away out of their mouth; they continued to call him Baali, "My Lord," and had no spirit of adoption, enabling them to say "Abba, Father." Nor is the time yet come when they shall be able to say Ishi, "My husband." That this was the true character of the former Church till the day of its ejection, is further manifest from the history of Ishmael, who, so soon as Isaac the son and heir was born, was not, nor his mother, suffered to remain in the house with Sarah and her son, but by God's own commandment, and against Abraham's inclination, they were cast out.

This is sufficient for the confirmation of our doctrine; but I cannot pass on without opening the other part of this allegory, for no way of teaching is so clear as by contrast, when it can be truly obtained, and here we have a divine warrant for it. Well, what saith the apostle of Sarah? She is the other covenant which was confirmed to us in the blood of Christ. And how are children begotten to her? By promise. We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. This distinction the apostle carries out to greater length in the 11th chapter of the Hebrews, where, after enumerating the elders of the old covenant who had been upheld by faith, he thus concludes his noble panegyric:—"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect," (verses 39, 40.) Yet though we be children of the promise, as Isaac was,—that is, begotten by faith and not by natural generation, as was Ishmael,—it were wrong to conclude that we have received the promise any more than they, seeing it is written unto the Christian Church, "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the

promise," (Heb. x. 36.) And what this promise is, is immediately subjoined, "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry," (verse 37.) This, then, is the promise—the coming of Christ—which the elders had not received, and which we yet wait to receive; and therefore it is that the apostle sets before us that cloud of witnesses, not because we are in a different, but because we are in the same condition of looking forward. Wherein, then, consisteth the difference between them and us, that they should be, like Ishmael, children of the bondwoman, and we, like Isaac, children of the free? It consisteth in the difference of the character of the two covenants under which we are born—the former, to wit that of Sinai, bringing with it no liberty or joy, but bondage and fear; the latter bringing with it the promise and assurance of both, after that we shall have patiently suffered, as did Sarah, the Lord's appointed time; for our mother is expressly declared by the apostle to be the new Jerusalem which is above, who is not yet manifested, nor shall be until the coming of the Lord. And if our mother shall not till then be manifested, how can any of her children be so? Wherefore it is written, that "our citizenship is in heaven," and that "our life is hid with Christ in God;" and again it is written, that "we are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the new Jerusalem;" wherefore, also, in the Apocalypse, the new Jerusalem is called the bride, the Lamb's wife. This new Jerusalem, this mother of us all, this Sarah, hath the promise of an Isaac, or child of laughter; and each one of us hath the promise also of an Isaac, or child of laughter. All who are baptized with the baptism of Christ, are baptized into the fellowship of this promise and hope; and when the new Jerusalem shall be completed, when she who is at once the spouse and mother of Christ shall have been completed, then shall Christ, at once her husband and her son, be manifested. But the idea is not yet complete; Christ, in His humiliation, was the foundation stone of this new Jerusalem, or rather He became so by His resurrection. In His flesh He was of the natural generation, born under the old covenant, and as it were a son of Hagar, and He lived by faith upon the promise, even as we

do ; and to him the promise was fulfilled in the resurrection, by which He was determined to be the Son of God ; but this determination hath not passed upon any other of the children of the promise who wait, and shall continue to wait, until the adoption, which is the redemption of the body, shall in like manner manifest them to be the sons of God. And I may say that the Church, since the time of Christ, hath been in a quickened state, conceiving and conceiving, and bringing the children unto the birth, but never yet having had power to bring one forth. The quickening of the Church was on the day of Pentecost by the Holy Ghost ; the birth or parturition of the Church will be in the resurrection of the saints. The quickening of every saint is at the time of his regeneration of the Holy Spirit ; his life thereafter is the conception and formation within him of Christ the hope of glory ; but the glorious child is not seen until death hath done his work, and then he ariseth like a seed out of the ground. Now, let it be observed that the former covenant which was made at Sinai, though then and there ratified, was, like all covenants, fulfilled in a future thing and a future time ; because a covenant is an agreement or stipulation concerning some things which are to be performed mutually between the parties. The future thing which the covenant of Sinai stipulated for was the land of promise, and Jerusalem its metropolis, and the temple of Jerusalem its palladium, all earthy, carnal, and sensual ; it brought the people into a bondage which neither they nor their children were able to bear ; it hath ended in a captivity and a misery the most wretched and long continued in the annals of time. In like manner the new covenant, confirmed in the blood of Christ with the spiritual seed and heirs of Abraham's faith, though ratified and confirmed and altogether completed in the sacrifice of Christ, and, I may say, accomplished in the mystery by His resurrection, yet doth it also contemplate as its end, and stipulate as its reward, not a present thing, but a thing future, which is called the new Jerusalem, and includeth in itself the liberation of all things from the bondage of corruption, and their restitution to that glorious image which they had at first in the idea of their great Creator ; which great redemption first taketh place upon

the bodies of the saints, who are included in the covenant, and for their sakes upon all things which are upon the earth, which they inherit; first upon the Jewish nation, those prisoners of hope, then upon the heathen, and then upon the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and, finally, upon earth and the heavens themselves. Our apostle, in further illustration and confirmation of the parallel between the two wives of Abraham, and the two covenants or states of the Church, makes a quotation from the prophecies of Isaiah in these words:—"For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband." If now we turn to the 54th chapter of the prophet Isaiah, and study these words in their connexion, we shall find much light cast upon the subject of the Christian Church. The preceding chapter, which contains the humiliation and death of Messiah, concludes with these words:—"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." The greater part of these promises made unto Messiah because of His humiliation, are not yet accomplished. He hath not yet seen of the travail of His soul, because we find Him saying, "I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain," (chap. xlix. 4.) He hath not seen His seed, because, as yet, the new Jerusalem with her children hath not been manifested. He is not the Father of the present age, but of "the age to come." Nor do I think that, in the sense of the prophet, His days have been prolonged. Indeed, I should rather say that the day of the Lord is not yet arrived, and that at present He is hidden. Nor can it be said that

the pleasure of the Lord hath prospered in His hands ; for as yet the government is not upon His shoulder ; but He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, who is accomplishing His purpose to bring His enemies under His feet, and, when the times and the seasons are accomplished, to bring the Only-begotten into the world, with the worship of all the gods. Nor as yet hath a portion been divided Him with the great ; nor hath He divided the spoil with the strong, because neither have the kingdoms acknowledged Him, nor hath He triumphed over those who acknowledge Him not. To one who is acquainted with the language of the prophets, and particularly of the prophet Isaiah, it will be sufficiently apparent that all these promises remain to be fulfilled against the day of His glorious strength ; but to one who has been accustomed to put the interpretation of preachers upon the words of the prophet, it will appear a very strange and perverse conclusion, to say that Christ hath not seen His seed. But to confirm this, strange as it may sound in our ears, accustomed to loose interpretation, we have only to read on in the prophet as follows :—" Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear ; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child : for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord." Now our apostle expressly applies this to the new Jerusalem, the bride, the Lamb's wife, the Sarah, which is the mother of the free-born children,—the mother of all who are born by the faith of the promise of Him who is to come. What meaneth it that she should be addressed as barren and not bearing, if so be that we who are the first fruits of the Spirit be already born unto her ? In this case she hath an infinitude of children, and hath had since the resurrection of Christ ; but if, as we have said above, these be only quickened, but not born,—having received the Spirit of adoption, but waiting for the real adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body,—entitled to the name of sons by reason of the power of the Holy Ghost which hath come upon us, but waiting still for the manifestation of the sons of God,—and, in one word, having the promise of a child as Sarah had, but not yet having possessed the child ; then it were a very natural and appropriate

thing to represent the new covenant or new Jerusalem by the figure of a barren woman that did not bear. But the authority of the apostle puts it beyond question that the barren woman here spoken of is the Jerusalem which is above, which is free, the mother of us all ; and therefore we can entertain no doubt whatever that the thing here personated by a barren woman is the new covenant confirmed in the blood of Christ. The question then is, what is the time of joy here spoken of by the prophet, in which she is to break forth on the right hand and on the left, and her seed are to inherit the Gentiles, and to make the desolate cities to be inhabited ? To answer this question, if we examine the language of the rest of the chapter, the time referred to will clearly appear to be the time of Jerusalem's future joy and glory :—" O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted ! behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord ; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established : thou shalt be far from oppression ; for thou shalt not fear : and from terror ; for it shall not come near thee." At this time, therefore, at which the glory of the earthly Jerusalem is to be restored will the barren woman bring forth her children by the resurrection from the dead, and the manifestation of the Jerusalem which is above ; and from that time forth shall Christ see His seed, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.

There is no one who reads this passage of the Galatians with due attention, but will agree in the main drift of these observations, that those who were born under the covenant of Sinai were born in bondage, and had no right nor title whatever to any inheritance. There ariseth a question upon this—By what title, then, did they hold the land while they did possess it ? The answer is, They held it in mere trust for their seed, to whom it was promised ; they held it as servants, as it were, under commission of the Highest, until His own Son should come, who had purchased not only that land, but the whole

world, by the sacrifice of Himself. And here it is remarkable that Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the patriarchs unto Moses, who lived under the promise, and were not under the bondage of the new covenant, were not permitted to possess a foot of land in the land of promise, lest the servile tenure might be broken by their freedom. The whole of their children had to be born from Mount Sinai into bondage, before they could be put in possession. Their right to possess was taken away, and then they were put into possession, that it might be clearly seen they held for another. And when Christ had come and purchased the inheritance with His blood, they were cast out, that very generation, and to this day have not been permitted to possess a foot of ground in it. And we who are the children of the freewoman, and are joint-heirs with Christ, are in like manner, though we be heirs also of Abraham's faith, excluded from the inheritance, and kept in the condition of the patriarchs, as pilgrims and sojourners upon the earth, looking for a city whose builder and whose maker is God. Now, surely the promises made to Abraham and his seed will not go for nought; surely the promises made by Christ to His people, of having a place in the new Jerusalem which cometh down out of heaven, will not come to nought. All the saints of God and faithful children of Abraham who have died waiting and expecting till the morning, will not be disappointed, or suffered to be put to shame. Emmanuel's land will not always be wasted by the raging torrents of ambitious men and destructive people. The time for redeeming the purchased inheritance will surely come. The time for the marriage between Christ and His betrothed spouse will surely come. And the time when they shall fill the earth with fruitfulness shall likewise come. Then shall we enter in as joint-heirs with Christ Jesus, and be made partakers of the riches of the glory of His inheritance. The remarks which I have made concerning the tenure of the former Church are true, not only of the land, but of all the promises, and prophecies, and ordinances of religion. It was a house over which Moses was faithful as a servant, but not as a son. It remained to be said of Christ, that He, "as a

son was over His own house ; which house are we, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." And it can be said of none other than He as yet. For we have not received any trust in the house as yet, except it be for polishing and preparing the lively stones of which it is building ; and our being placed in the house is in virtue of His going away. "In my Father's house are many mansions : behold, I go to prepare a place for you ; and if I go away, I will come again, that where I am, there ye may be also." In proof of that bondage continuing on the former Church, it is said of John the Baptist, "But the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Therefore it is said also of the prophets, that though they inquired and searched diligently, they understood not the things which they prophesied, but had it revealed to them, that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did signify the things which they spoke by the Spirit of God. There can be no doubt that in all things, as well as in the oracles of God, they were keepers and guardians for those that were to come after. Now it were an interesting question, to inquire in what condition the souls of those that died in faith under this covenant of bondage were found till the coming of the Lord. Into this question I cannot enter hastily, and time doth not permit me to enter fully. But I may say, in passing, that I believe that, as Christ by His death and resurrection brought with Him the bodies of many of the saints who slept in Jerusalem, so also must He have delivered their souls, and carried them with Him thither also, whither He carried their bodies.

There is another remark which I have to make before closing this discourse, upon the different conditions of the children of the two covenants ; which is, that as the Jewish covenant was a bondwoman betrothed unto God, and we a freewoman betrothed unto God, the punishment of our adultery, according to the Levitical law, will be different. For it is written (Lev. xix. 20) that the bondwoman shall only be scourged, but (Deut. xxii. 24) that the virgin shall be put to death. That scourging the Jewish Church is now undergoing, and shall continue to undergo, until the Lord shall

have pity upon her. This, no doubt, is the ground of those promises of restoration to the favour of her husband which are made after many days of affliction, when it is said, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord." If they understood this, they would no longer go about to deny the restoration of the Jewish people to their first inheritance; and, moreover, if they understood that one who is betrothed unto Christ as a virgin, even as St Paul says he did betroth the Gentile Church, and who yet committeth adultery, as the Church which is in Babylon hath done with the kings of the earth, cannot be spared upon a mere chastisement, but must be put to death, we would have different views than now are entertained of that wretched apostasy, and be in more fear than we are lest we should be found to touch the unclean thing. This is the true reason why in the Apocalypse there is not one word of mercy to the apostate Church there prophesied of, but utter destruction for ever and for ever; while in the books of Moses, and the psalms, and the prophets, there never occurreth any such thing as utter and exterminating wrath, but always restoration after a season of sore chastisement and tribulation.

Thus, dear brethren, we ought, like those possessed of freedom, to rejoice in it, and have nothing to do with the bondage of Moses and the law, but be possessed with the spirit of love, and of power, and of a sound mind. And, being full of the spirit of adoption, we ought to cry out, "Abba, Father." And, like a virgin betrothed unto Christ, against the day of our espousals we ought to preserve our souls full of His image, and not suffer the thought of another, or any suggestion of Satan, or love of the world, or desire of the flesh, to pollute the chastity of our souls, and wound the entireness of our love. As daughters of God, betrothed to His own Son, we ought to give good heed to Him, and worship the King; then will He greatly desire our beauty. Finally, as those who are earnestly and deeply in love with the Son of God, we ought to be full of longing for the sight of His goodly

presence, and for the day of our joyful espousals. We ought to desire and long for His coming, like the bride in the Song of Solomon, who like the turtle-dove moaneth the absence of her bridegroom, and seeketh everywhere that she may find him, and would die but that she is comforted with the presence of his appearance.

## XXI.

### GOD OUR FATHER.

EPH. I. 2.

*God our Father.*

**H**AVING shewn, first, from the substance and purpose of the Divine decree, and secondly, from the gradual revelation thereof in the course of the Divine dispensations, that the name of Father is proper to God only towards His eternal Son, and Him only, and is with signal care defended from the use, not only of other men, but of all other beings whatever, it becometh to us a very grave and serious question to consider under what right or title we come to be permitted to appropriate unto ourselves such a singular prerogative as to call God "Father," and to call ourselves "sons of God." For that we have this privilege, there can be no doubt, from all the scriptures of the New Testament, in which the standing name of God is "our Father," and the not unfrequent name of believers His sons or children. In His Sermon upon the Mount, which is the first public discourse He made unto His disciples, Jesus broke the shell of this mystery most effectually; and more than twelve times, with a frequency, indeed, which bespeaks a design, He gives them a right to the fellowship of His own peculiar honour by continually saying, "your Father which is in heaven," "your heavenly Father." And to fix it in the memory and the use of His Church for ever, He presented them, on the same occasion, with a prayer, in which God hath no other name nor appellation whatever than this, "Our Father which art in heaven,"—a circumstance most devoutly and thankfully to be observed, as actually substituting the new name of "Our

Father," in the room of those names of God and Jehovah-God and God of Abraham, with which He had formerly permitted and required Himself to be entreated. At His baptism, when Christ was filled with the Holy Ghost, the Father acknowledged Him to be His Son in the hearing of them all, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And being thus both acknowledged of the Father, and endowed with the Spirit, it became not only His right, but His duty, to refer back to God as His Father: as it was His work of grace and reconciliation, and His Father's pleasure, and the end of the covenant between them, that all who believe should share with Him in the yet unimagined honour. And both these things, His own right to be called "the Son of God," and our right in and through Him, the Father's propriety and glory in Him as His Son, and the Father's pleasure "to bring many sons unto God," He doth join in one from the very beginning of His ministry, permitting, yea, enjoining His disciples to call God the Father which is in heaven, and by that name requiring them to pray unto Him. This is enough to shew that we have such a liberty in Christ. But for our greater information, I shall follow onwards through our Lord's ministry, to find what light He casts upon this blessed privilege into which He introduced the Church. In His next discourse, held with His twelve apostles on the eve of their commission to go forth, two by two, and preach the kingdom, as it is recorded in the 10th chapter of Matthew, we find the Lord three several times giving them the use and comfort of this their most gracious and blessed relationship unto God, just to encourage them to all boldness and liberty in preaching the kingdom of God, and maintaining their testimony in the midst of all persecutions and oppositions of men: "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you," (verses 19, 20.) Blessed is the disciple of Christ, whether he be a preacher or not, who can take to him the assurance of this promise, for a bridle to the natural unruliness of the tongue and a fountain of pure love and true wisdom in the heart, which by nature is

deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. And there can be no doubt, every one of us who are born of God by the power of His quickening Spirit, ought to be assured that the Spirit of their Father, which is in them, will think and speak and act at all times, and then especially when the truth of the testimony of Jesus, the beloved, is called into question by the mighty powers of Satan. This same doctrine of "God our Father," and privilege of believers to be "the sons of God," is used the second time in this discourse to comfort the apostles, and with them all the Church founded on the apostles, concerning God's providence over His children, His infinite knowledge of all their conditions, and most bountiful provision for all their wants: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows," (verses 28-31.) As a child in the arms of its parent hath no fear, but according to the danger clings the closer, and looks boldly out upon that which threateneth it, fondly deeming itself beyond all possible reach of harm; so the child of God, without any fondness or miscalculation, should intrust himself to the arms of His Father in heaven, whose knowledge numbereth all the fowls of heaven, and whose care extendeth to the minutest and most unvalued of them all; but whose care of His own people not only embraceth all their goings, and numbereth all their members, but counteth the numerous hairs upon their head, and hath a favour for, and taketh a charge over every one of them. How marvellous is His loving-kindness to His children! therefore will we put our trust in Him. We will put our trust in Him, and not be afraid; for He will not suffer us to be moved, or at any time to be put to shame. He toucheth this subject the third time in the 32d and 33d verses: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in

heaven;" by which words we have a new insight given us into the mystery—that though we be introduced into all the privileges of the sons of God, there is a time at which we shall be confessed or acknowledged before the Father; and this act of adoption, this avowal of the true sons from the bastards, belongs unto Christ, whose true affiliation hath been put beyond all doubt by the resurrection from the dead; and the principle by which He will conduct the separation of the true from the supposititious, He declareth to be this, Whether we have confessed Him before men, or been ashamed of Him and denied Him before men. Whereby we are taught that it is not for ourselves, or our own advantage, but only for the end of confessing and honouring Christ, that we are called with the holy calling of the sons of God; which if we shall neglect, preferring other ends of our being,—which if we shall fear to perform, dreading the many enemies of Christ, and their present power to hurt the body,—then shall Christ account of us as treacherous men who betrayed our trust, or foolish men who thought not at all concerning it. What trust? do you ask. The trust of avowing, in the hearing of all men, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God; and that every one who believeth in this hath in Him eternal life, and shall be raised from the dead and adopted as a son of God. The Son of man died for this testimony, that He was the Son of God; and we must be willing to die for the same: and if to die, then to suffer all temptation of Satan and extremities of the world; which doing, He will in the day of the manifestation of the sons of God give us that adoption for which we now wait, to wit, the redemption of the body, or the resurrection of the dead. Such is the use made by our Lord of this doctrine in the discourse of the 10th chapter of Matthew.

For it seems to me the best, and indeed the only safe way, of guiding ourselves in the appropriation, as in the understanding and the knowledge of any mystery, to study carefully how it is applied and appropriated by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures; and I begin this work at once of learning and of teaching with the same Sermon on the Mount in which the use of it occurs so frequently, as it is written in the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of Matthew. The first time it

occurs is in chap. v. 16,—“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” The use to be made of this privilege of sonship by the whole family of God is to shew forth unto those men who are not yet brought into the family, that light of life and beauty of holiness which we have derived from the true Light, that they may discern the difference between the light of our countenance and the darkness of other men, and take knowledge of the change which hath passed upon us through the operation of God, and give unto Him glory and strength,—ascribe unto Him the strength which is in His sanctuary, and the beauty which shineth in His holy place. To preach as doth the sun from his tent on high, and to teach as do the moon and stars and the other handiworks of God ; this to do in the higher sphere of reason for the conviction of the darkened reason of men, and calling them out of the darkness of nature into the marvellous light of the gospel of the only-begotten Son of God,—this is the end for which we have been called into the family, and the work which is given us to do ; and after the discharge of which we shall be adopted into the everlasting and unalterable condition of sons. This is a very high honour to which we have been advanced, of being charged with the most precious light of life, in order to hold it forth to the comfort and conviction, or to the confusion and condemnation of those who are in darkness : let us walk as the children of the light and of the day, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. The second time it is used is like unto this, and if anything yet more ennobling to our poor fallen estate : “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you ; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven : for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust,” (verse 44.) I say this is higher in appropriation than the former, inasmuch as it appropriates to us the very disposition of our Father, and calls upon us to shew it forth in the same indiscriminate profusion of bounty and blessing in which He aboundeth unto

all. The Lord quotes our Father's way of dealing with the wicked and the unjust during this season of mercy, and calleth upon us to shew our affiliation to Him by doing likewise. He taketh the power to do so for granted because of our being children, and He calleth upon us to put it forth that we might be known to be children;—He on the great scale of creation and providence and grace, we on the smaller scale of our prayers and personal experiences. Thus, saith He, by blessing them that curse us, and doing good to them that hate us, and praying for them which despitefully use us, shall we prove ourselves to be the children of God, and of the generation of grace; not the children of the devil, and of the generation of the impure, who love to canker, to consume, and to devour all things. But still higher to set the mark of our privilege as sons, He addeth: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," (verse 48;) as if in honouring us with His name it were the purpose of God to endow us with the share also of His perfection. And to me the name "sons of God" is of such passing excellence, that I can conceive nothing to be withheld from us which it is in the capacity of manhood to receive. Depend upon it, it is no empty compliment to call us sons, but a full assurance of all, and more than all, which that name importeth amongst men; even as our Lord himself declareth in this very discourse, drawing a contrast between our earthly parent and our Father in heaven, in order to shew how much more bountiful He is. We may believe, therefore, that there is no perfection which belongeth unto God, whereof He is not willing to bestow on us the similitude, the share, in as far as a creature can possess it, in order that we may bear His image and shew forth the human portraiture of His perfections. Wherefore we are said to be partakers of the divine nature, and to be renewed after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness. O brethren, what manner of love this is with which the Father hath loved us that we should be called the sons of God! How idly have we been using this word Father! how little have we been thinking of the mystery of love and privilege which was couched under it! Blessed be the Lord, who hath taken this veil of stupidity from our eyes. May He open to us His

whole pleasure herein as we proceed in our search after the truth, which is more precious than hid treasures.

In the 6th chapter of Matthew we have the doctrine, that God in heaven is our Father, used first to withdraw our minds away from all upon the earth to the single desire of pleasing and glorifying Him ; for He is a jealous God, and cannot give His glory unto another. And we must love Him with our whole heart. If He is to us a Father, we must be to Him sons ; and as the Son of man obtained the resurrection which approved Him Son of God, by setting His Father's will and pleasure continually before Him, so must it be with every other son of man who would attain the same distinction of being declared a son of God by deliverance from death. My dear brethren, when I recollect the tears and strong cryings with which Christ interceded for and obtained this boon notwithstanding His perfect holiness, I shudder with the fear that neither I nor any living man will ever attain unto it. I could run and hide myself while meditating on this mystery, as Luther is said to have done when meditating on the mystery of our universal sinfulness ; and, as he cried out, "For he hath concluded them all in unbelief," so could I lift up my voice, and cry aloud with weeping, "For not one of us shall be delivered from death." And nothing could comfort or assure me but the knowledge that it is a part of the divine purpose to bring many sons unto glory ; and the grace is all the same whoever it is, for all are equally unworthy. Therefore I am comforted under the knowledge of the free grace of God, and have a hope that both I and many of my people may be visited with this grand justification from the guilt of sin, and emancipation from the power of the grave, and adoption of sons, concerning which we discourse. But if we would so arise to honour and glory, we must set aside all self-glorifying and all men-pleasing in our alms, (verse 1,) in our prayers, (verse 5,) in our fastings, (verse 16,) and in all other our religious works ; otherwise we shall have no reward of our Father which is in heaven. But if we do our offices of piety with a respect to His eye only and His reward, He will reward us openly ; that is, in the sight of angels and all just men made perfect, in the day in which He shall

be glorified in us over sin, and over death, and over the grave. This also is the function of a father, to give reward unto his children according to their deservings; and this we may look for at the hands of our heavenly Father, who hath permitted His name to be named over us. This chiefly in the resurrection; but not then only, for even in this life we may ask Him for what things we have need of; and in doing so, we should not think He needeth to be dunned like as one that hath no heart to give, nor that it must be wrought out of Him by many words. He is our Father, (verse 8,) and knoweth what things we have need of before we ask Him. He comprehendeth our being, He knoweth our wants: we should go to Him, therefore, with a full assurance of a willing ear and a ready answer to our prayers. But the same comprehension of our Father should guard us against asking anything amiss, or feigning wants which we have not, or formally expressing those which we have. We ought not to speak as unto a stock or stone, but unto a Father both able and willing to supply all our wants out of the fulness which is in Jesus Christ. And to the effect of preserving this for ever uppermost in our minds at the time of prayer, the Lord requireth us to begin our prayer by addressing Him, "Our Father which art in heaven." O brethren, I feel myself overwhelmed again, when I call to mind the formality, the coldness, the unmeaning wordiness of our prayers. Was ever father's ear on earth so coldly and undutifully addressed as we have addressed the ear of our Father in heaven? Was ever father's affection so insulted with doubts and suspicions of every kind as hath been the affection of our Father in heaven? Methinks I see a father whose son approaches him with drawling tones, with an absent mind, with a vacant look, and a staring eye, in order to ask of him some petition, or make unto him some prayer: he bears until he can bear no longer, and either rises and removes his insulted presence, or, unable longer to endure the ingratitude and indecency of one whom he hath so much loved, he rises into wrath and indignation, and commands him forth from his presence. O my beloved brethren, I feel that our prayers must be of another temper—simple from the feeling of want, earnest from the heart fully informed, with

faith and hope springing from that love which casteth out fear, breathing the spirit of children who are already awake and alive to the goodness of their Father. It must be so before we can hope to be raised from amongst the dead, and openly acknowledged for the sons of God. I do entreat you again to consider the fervency of the Son of man's prayers,—their unwearied continuance, their tears, and their strong cryings. O God, save us from this dreadful formality and utter deadness into which we have fallen in our prayers and supplications; and help Thy servant at all times to offer unto Thee, as the Father of this congregation, and this congregation to join with him, as being all Thy children!

My heart would utterly sink, both for you and for myself, were it not supported by what our Lord next says of our heavenly Father,—“For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses,” (verse 14.) Here is the opening of a door of hope to the offending children, and the revelation of another aspect of God's fatherhood to His family; which is, that He both can and will forgive their trespasses, upon one condition, that they carry themselves with a like compassion and tenderness to the men who are not of the family. Whereby, as also by other instances where the like condition is interposed, we do discern, more and more clearly, the end and purpose of this generation of children by the Holy Ghost to be in order that they may serve for stewards of God's bounty and grace, and representatives of His character and conduct in the various parts of this fallen world; which office of presenting their Father's true dispositions, if those who are called to be children will persevere to fulfil, then shall they be openly avouched to be the sons of God by the resurrection from the dead, and adopted into that family which at present consisteth of one only, the only-begotten Son of God, but shall hereafter consist of all who have received His word and testimony, and fulfilled on the earth the gracious will of our Father which is in heaven; and, being openly acknowledged and freely adopted in the day of the manifestation of the sons of God, because of our son-like obedience and faithfulness unto God, despite of the

devil, the world, and the flesh, we shall be advanced to the fellowship of Christ's throne, and kingdom, and glory, during all the continuance thereof, and thereafter occupied with I know not what infinite and incomprehensible administrations from the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and under Jesus Christ, the manifest God and Lord of all. For, brethren, I am not going to lower the high dignity and worth of this name, "sons of God," as to include under it angels or arch-angels, or any other order of beings, but do reserve it for the Son of man, who wrestled with sin and death, and was advanced to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead, and for the other sons of men, who, being quickened by the same Spirit, do, through the constraining of sin and the corruption of death, rise into the honour of the same title and preferment. So much doth the magnitude of this subject enlarge upon me, and with such brightness doth the surpassing glory of it shine, that I am not yet prepared to yield a place here to those who shall live in the millennial days of the Church, though I be not prepared to refuse them one; because it doth appear to my mind that they are not tried for it by the temptations with which we are tried, nor prepared for it by the offices of trust with which we are intrusted in the midst of such raging rebellion and ravenous, devouring enemies of God; seeing they shall live in the dispensation of glory, not of humility, and under the imprisonment, not under the enlargement, of Satan. And herein consisteth the strength and intensity of electing love, other than that universal and common love which shall preside over the day of light and glory that is about to be revealed; for how much stronger that demonstration of love which sustaineth a son in adverse and calamitous times, which beareth him through shipwrecks, and conveyeth him unharmed over the breakers of this rough and stormy sea, than that which another knows in the calm and pleasant sunshine of a summer's day? And I may say, moreover, that it is due unto us, unto our constant sufferings, and unremitted prayers, and most faithful testimony unto God and unto Christ, that Satan is cast out from troubling and tormenting the estate of the world; as it was "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of the testimony of his saints,

and their not loving their lives unto the death," that Michael and his angels prevailed to cast the dragon and his angels out of heaven. So that I may say the millennium of blessedness unto the earth is the first fruits of the work and the witness of the sons of God here below ; and well, therefore, doth and ought it to appertain to them to govern it. But, perceiving no such suffering or sacrifice, no such apostolic commission into barbarous and rebellious parts, to appertain unto the saints of that glorious age, I do stand in doubt whether they shall after death be advanced into the same place and dignity of sons of God which clearly belongeth unto redeemed men, as the brethren of the Son of man. But upon this subject I pronounce not rashly, nor would have entered upon it at all, had it not been to explain the reason of that condition which is interposed between us and our Father's gifts—viz., the condition of doing likewise by the sons of men as He doth by us ; proving clearly that it is a vicegerency which we are under the probation of, and, as it were, apprenticed to, and that it is a vicegerency to which we are to be promoted, and that it is a vicegerency, not of servants under a Master, but of sons under a Father ; that the gift of forgiveness and favour is not purchased by so much servile task-work, but bestowed upon us of free grace, for Christ's sake, and derived to us from Him who entered into the right of it by inheritance, and by election doth choose and call, by adoption doth freely admit, us into the participation of the same, for the same ends of His Father's glory to be used, and, being otherwise used, or rather abused, then unto our own destruction. And this is the reason why we so often find the affections and gifts of the Father unto the sons connected with corresponding affections and gifts of the sons to all other men, in order at once to exhort them to the resemblance of the Father, and teach them His great affection to His children, while it guards them against pride or uncharitableness, or the contempt of other men. Draw, then, upon your Father for forgiveness to what extent ye shew forgiveness to men, but no further ; for think not that ye are to bask in the sunshine and riot in the consolation, but ye are to spread abroad the sunshine, and diffuse the consolation, to the utmost bounds of the habita-

tions of men. "Our Father which art in heaven, forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

We have another touch given to this portraiture of the Father by our Divine Teacher, the only-begotten Son, who dwelt in His bosom from all eternity, in these words, which set forth the care which our Father hath upon the temporal affairs of His family: "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? . . . (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things," (verses 25, 26, 32.) These words, with the most beautiful context of which they are a part, are introduced as a sufficient reason to disengage the children of the kingdom from the service of Mammon, the god of riches, and set them free to follow the pursuit of the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and to persevere in the service of God all the days of their life, upon the assurance that He will add all these earthly things to them out of the fatherly love and care which He hath over them. Whereof to convince them, the Master directeth their attention to the plentiful sustenance of the fowls of heaven, and the splendid attire of the lilies of the field. It is not our present object to enforce the argument, but rather to dwell upon the tender care of our heavenly Father which it reveals. It declares the whole of providence to be directed by Him with a single eye to the welfare of His children upon the earth,—that His almighty power over all the creatures as God their Creator is subordinated to His love of the Church as their Father. To those He is a preserver, but to these He is a Father: those are His servants, but these are His children: the world is His domain and possession, but the Church is His house and home; and all the cherishing heat of the sun which ariseth upon the evil and the good, and all the nourishment of the rains which descend upon the just and the unjust, and all other the husbandry and providence of God over the visible creation,

are but the Father's industry and care to have store of food and wealth of inheritance for the children to whom He hath given life. Is not the life pledge enough for the meat? Is not the body pledge enough for the raiment? Therefore dismiss the fears and cares which they have who know not God as a Father. Let the assurance of His perfect love cast them all out, and address your whole souls to the request and the research of the righteousness which belongeth to the adopted children of God, and to the promotion of that kingdom of righteousness which is to come. But what becomes of industry, of forethought, and of precaution, and of the many thoughts which are requisite to the sustenance of our families, and absolutely necessary for obtaining the means of support? To this I answer by asking another question, whether the son, who is concerned for his father's honour and interest, or the hireling who is working for wages, will take the greatest care of the master's goods, and labour the more diligently for their increase? the son who is assured of his father's love and of the inheritance when he comes of age, or the hireling who knows only of his day's support and of his day's hire? Or, I ask again, would it relax the diligence or weaken the hand of a servant if by any unexpected discovery it should come to the knowledge of him and to his master that they were related to one another as father and son? Or to bring the case still more parallel, would it relax the bonds of gratitude in a slave towards his master that his master should make him his freed man and afterwards adopt him for his son? This is a case which is not suppositious, but used often to occur in ancient times and under heathen conditions of society; and it was ordinarily attended with the most devoted fidelity and attachment. Now such a change passeth upon us when, from being slaves of sin, and servants of Satan, and bondsmen of this world, we become the Lord's freemen, heirs of the righteousness which is by faith, and sons of the kingdom which is to come, waiting for our adoption in the day of the redemption of the body. By which transformation of our nature, and revolution of our destiny, we are not taken out of the world, or isolated to a corner of it, but installed into the dignity of its heirs and true possessors; and are called upon

to intromit and intermeddle with every part of it over which our Father hath given us any charge or trust, to put in righteous claims thereto on the part of the great Son and Heir, and to do our uttermost to redeem it out of the hands of the usurper who hath the present enjoyment of it. This to do, not by force, still less to do it by fraud, but by an honest and upright and industrious husbandry of what belongeth to us, and a thankful welcome of whatever more our Father is pleased to send, and a good assurance that for these small talents, if we use them well, whole cities and kingdoms will yet be given to us. We then do seek the kingdom of heaven when we uphold the interests of the Church of Christ upon the earth by every means in our power, and we then do seek the righteousness of the kingdom of heaven when in upholding the interests of the Church of Christ we proceed in all things according to the righteous and holy will of God our heavenly Father. And having our whole souls filled with this honest and earnest desire of our Father's kingdom and our Father's will, we would not wrest the honour of providing for the house and family out of the Father's hand; we would not impute unto Him want of affection or deficiency of power; we would not forget our station of sons, and the late act of His grace by which we were admitted thereto; but with great thankfulness observe the affection, and duty, and humility of our place, and never forget the honour, and the power, and the majesty, and the rights of our Father's place;—tasting as we do daily of His bounty, for so many years entreated graciously in His home, pardoned in our rebellions, received back from our prodigality, beloved with all a Father's heart, and regaled with all a Father's joy, and in due time to be admitted to the inheritance of all which our Father hath provided for His faithful and dutiful children. Such, I take it, is the new light which is thrown upon this divine relationship by this other touch of the great Master's pencil.

Furthermore, and finally at this time, hear with amazement and silent delight what is delivered by our Lord in this same discourse—"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one

that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him!" (chap. vii. 7-11.) This crowneth, and is worthy to crown, the climax of discoveries made in this discourse concerning the fatherhood of God. It sealeth all that ever was conceived of affectionateness and care within a father's heart unto his dear children, upon the great Almighty Creator towards the disciples of Christ and sons of the kingdom; and beyond that biggest measure of affection upon earth it passeth into an infinite amplitude and enlargement which no heart of fallen creature, or heart of creature unfallen, is able to contain, or even to sympathise with. I think these words do settle for ever all your surface theologians and sentimental preachers, who hold the flimsy notion that all these words are but similitudes taken from real things for expressing that which is not real, but only as it were shadowy and unsubstantial, and not to be closely pried into; whereby, instead of leading men to search into and know God, who is revealed by Christ in good words and true, they do avert the face of the people away from Him to the honour of the creature; and if the people would turn their eye towards God, they give them a dark cloud of infinite extent to look upon, and cover them with its cold shadow. But as the Lord liveth, whom to know is life eternal, all the conditions and bearings of the visible creation, and all the accidents forthcoming from the pregnant womb of providence,—yea, and all the relationships of man to man, and everything else which word expresseth, and what beyond expression imagination can conceive or the heart feel,—are ordinances and appointments of the great God and our Saviour, and constructions and fabrications of the word and Spirit of our God, designed and made of express purpose for the expression of those realities which are in the Godhead, and of those real properties which pertain to the Divine substance, and of those real relations of the Divine persons

towards one another, and of those offices which it was their purpose to perform towards all the election according to grace, and especially towards the children of men. Thou fool! the reality is in God, the emblem is in the thing which is seen and felt, the reality is in that which THE WORD aimeth to express; and what aimeth THE WORD to express but that fulness of relation which is in the Father towards Himself, and through Him towards all the creatures? Therefore doth our Lord, who is THE WORD, lay hold on all events, on all relations, on all existences, and use them all to their right use of expressing the fulness of that fountain-will of the Father which designed them all, and from all eternity generated the Son to contain them all. And in this instance immediately before us, having revealed many things concerning the Father and the Father's elect family, He taketh up at length with a strong hand the very relationship amongst men which is emblematical of, and hath derived its name from that in God which he would describe, and asketh them, as I do now ask you, O ye of little faith, "What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?"—mocking his hunger, as heretofore Satan did that of Christ, giving Him a stone for bread. But ye are not of the generation of the murderer, but children of the Highest, and would not so turn the suffering of your child into derision, and suffer him to starve, and murder him with a laugh in your mouth. Or if you did, yea, there is such an abhorrence of such a thing in man's natural breast, that the law would lodge you in its holds, and consign you to death; if the rabble, yea, the very riotous mob, did not tear you limb from limb. Or, if he were to ask a fish, would he convey a serpent into his hand, to sting him, and infuse its poison in his tender frame? No, ye would not; the thing is too horrible for the imagination of men in these civilised parts, and might hardly be put into words, save by Him who made the worlds, and knows what evil they are capable of engendering. And yet we are evil; but our evil riseth not to that monstrous pitch: we know how to give good gifts unto our children, and would rather take the stone unto ourselves, and give the bread to our child; evil hath not so far subdued reason and the voice

of God, which crieth from the depths of our depraved nature. And if human reason, all blinded to truth, and hardened to pure affection, doth still know the law of natural love, whereof the very brutes are not devoid towards their young ; what, can ye ever imagine or believe that God, the Fountain of all truth and the Father of all affection, the Creator of the heart of man, should be without feeling towards His creatures, and yearning affection over His children ! that He should be deaf to their cries, and regardless of their wants, unpitying, unforgiving, implacable, unbountiful, to His own children, to His own elect, who cry unto Him day and night ! Though He bear long with their oppressors, He will surely avenge them ; He will save His own people ; He will send prosperity ; He will refuse no good gift to them who walk uprightly. Be assured of this unceasing affection in your Father which is in heaven, and know His unstinting watchfulness, and add thereto His almighty power, and you will not fail to ask whatever you stand in need of, and to ask in faith as dear children ; and whatsoever ye ask believing, ye shall receive.

Thus, dear brethren, from this first discourse of our Lord to His disciples, we have gathered these points of doctrine concerning the Fatherhood of God and our vocation as His sons. First, That it is our privilege and our duty to address all our prayers to Him as to a Father, with the confidence and affection of children ; and if our prayers, then also our thoughts and all our discourse concerning Him should observe the same confidential, and affectionate, and reverential style ; and our whole souls should be imbued with the fellowship of His love, the honour of His name, the privilege of His house, the hope of His inheritance, and the joy of His chosen. Secondly, That it is our privilege and our duty to look to be made perfect, as He is perfect, and to enter into the full gift and prerogative of sons ; to bear the image, and inherit the likeness, of their Father, according to our capacity, and within the bounds of our habitation ; so that no grace, nor dignity, nor disposition, nor inclination, which appertaineth to Himself, is He unwilling, but most desirous, that we should possess. Thirdly, That His providence is towards us continually for good, and He knoweth what things we stand in need of before

we ask Him, and maketh all things to work together for good to them which love Him, and are called according to His purpose to be sons unto Him. And therefore we ought to have no doubt nor fear that He will abundantly supply all our wants in Christ Jesus our Lord. Nevertheless, fourthly, He expecteth and He loveth to be besought and entreated of us, as being full of affection, and desirous to witness affection in all His children. Therefore nothing delighteth Him so much as to be besought with all faith through Jesus Christ, whom He honoureth, and whom alone He will honour, in every gift which He bestoweth. And finally, That our vocation as sons is for no worth in us, but only for His mercy and love in Christ Jesus our Lord, and for the witness, and testimony, and declaration of His honour and glory, by our imitation of His example, and manifestation of His holy spirit in all things : blessing, and not cursing ; gently and graciously entreating our worst and most malicious enemies ; shining with all our light for the awakening and enlightening of others ; forgiving men their trespasses ; and in all other things doing the will of our Father which is in heaven. All which, dear brethren, are your privileges this day before the Lord, purchased by the death and resurrection of Christ, and possessed only by the regeneration of the Holy Ghost, obtained through faith, which is the gift of God ; for to them who believe, and to them only, giveth He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. Wherefore I do entreat you to perfect faith, that you may perfect holiness in the fear of God ; and to rejoice this day in your liberty and privileges as the sons of God.

## XXII.

### THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

EPH. I. 2.

*And from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**T**HE grace and peace with which Paul the apostle of Jesus Christ doth bless the saints at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus, proceedeth not from God the Father only, but equally and alike from the Lord Jesus Christ ; and this same conjunction of the Father and the Son as the source and origin of all spiritual benefits, our apostle maketh not in one, but in all his epistles, and not he only but also the other apostles. We may never doubt, therefore, from this the constant style of Holy Scripture, that the two Divine Persons thus advanced into equal honour as the fountain of grace and peace, are to be equally acknowledged by the Church, and witnessed to by the saints ; that they may not and cannot be separated or contemplated apart : "No man knoweth the Son but the Father ; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son shall reveal him." Therefore the gospel is by our apostle called "the mystery of God, and [both] of the Father, and of Christ," (Col. ii. 2.) And by the apostle John it is declared, "If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye shall also continue in the Son, and in the Father," (1 John ii. 24.) And again, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," (chap. i. 3.) Into that part and office in the mystery which the Father hath we have inquired diligently in several discourses, and we do now propose, by the help of the Spirit, to testify unto the office of the Son, according as it is contained under His name, Jesus Christ the Lord

Into the mystery of His name, Jesus, we would then with all reverence first inquire.

The name Jesus being written at full length is Jehoshua, which consisteth of two parts—Hoshea, which was the original name of the son of Nun; and Jah, which was added by Moses when he sent him to spy out the land of Canaan. Hoshea is “saviour,” or “salvation;” on which account it is said, “Thou shalt call his name JESUS, for he shall save his people from their sins,” (Matt. i. 21.) And Jah is a contraction of Jehovah, used singly to denote the whole force of that name in Ps. lxxviii. 4, “Extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name Jah;” used along with it, to give it force and intensity, in two passages of Isaiah. The first is: “Behold, God is my salvation (Hoshea); I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord (Jah) Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation (Hoshea),” (chap. xii. 2.) This is a very remarkable passage, both as containing the two parts of the name Jesus, Jah and Hoshea, and as declaring that the Jewish people in the day of their restoration shall say that Jah Jehovah hath become Jah Hoshea, or Jesus their Saviour; and in consequence of this, their confession of the name of Christ, it is added, “Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation;” which I understand to signify their abundant and joyful partaking of the Holy Ghost. The other passage in which Jah occurs is to the same effect, and spoken of the same people against the same time,—“We have a strong city: salvation (Hoshea) will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. . . . Trust ye in the Lord (Jehovah) for ever: for in the Lord (Jah) is everlasting strength,” (chap. xxvi. 1, 4.) This separation of Jah, a part of the name Jehovah, from the rest, and this use of it in the separate form always in connexion with the idea of salvation, and hence with the very word Hoshea, I cannot but regard as a preparation for that combination and composition of the word into the one name Jehoshua, which in the type had been already done by an act of God’s minister, and in the antitype was about to be done by the act of God himself. I observe further, that Hoshea had his name changed when he went to spy out the land of Canaan, the inheritance which God had by the covenant of

Sinai set apart unto the seed of Abraham. The son of Nun had already, so to speak, won his name of "saviour," by the various battles wherein God had given him to smite the enemies of Israel; but the name of Jehoshua he had to win for himself, by going into the enemy's land and bringing out of it a faithful and good report, which was to signify that the Son of God upon coming into this world, which God hath intended for an inheritance of His saints, should have the name of Jesus given to Him, and should earn the like, not by reporting it able to be taken, but by purchasing it to Himself out of the hands of the enemy, and acquiring the right to it for His people, against the dispensation of the fulness of the times, when the purchased possession shall be redeemed. These being the component parts of the name Jesus, let us now inquire into the meaning of each of them; for it is by understanding the name of the Son that we shall understand His person and His offices in the blessed Trinity.

The name Jah or Jehovah is sufficiently explained to us in that which the Lord spake unto Moses from the midst of the bush,—“And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you,” (Exod. iii. 14,) which teacheth us that self-existent, underived, unchangeable, self-sufficient being is that which is contained under the name Jehovah: self-existent in Himself, underived from any higher origin, and unchangeable by any cause; all-sufficient in Himself, and therefore the origin, the changer, and the sufficiency of every other existing person and thing. This incommunicable name the Jews held to be unutterably sacred, and would by no means name it, but retained it in the mysterious holiness of impenetrable silence; and whenever it occurred in the text they pronounced in its stead some of the appellations of God,—a fond conceit, which degenerated at length into a base superstition, yet worthy to be mentioned as teaching us the opinion of the nation that in this name lay folded up, as it were, the very essence and substance of that Divine Being, of whom all the other names expressed only the attributes. There might also perhaps be concealed under this rabbinical conceit another act of worship done unto Moses and the Mosaic eco-

nomny, with a view to which this name was assumed : as it is written in *Exod. vi. 3*,—"I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty ; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them." This name Almighty, or Elohim, is proper to God as the maker of all the creatures, ere yet He had revealed Himself as the chooser out and redeemer of a part of the fallen creatures, and was most proper to preserve men from running into the worship of the creature, by continually declaring that it was made by another than itself ; but when God began to manifest His purpose according to election by the calling out of Abraham, and His salvation of a Church from the wrecks of fallen nature by the imputation of a righteousness not inherent in it, but derived from Him, then He added to the name of God, the Creator of all, the special and peculiar propriety which He had in His chosen ones, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob," and appointing the same for a memorial unto all generations ; because this Church portion, the saved portion of the fallen creatures, shall endure unto all ages, and constitute God's most excellent and glorious inheritance. But, at the call of Moses, being about to institute a covenant wherein He was to pledge Himself to ten thousand things, whereof not one was to be perfectly accomplished until after a hundred ages of sore contradiction and oppression, He thinketh it good to take unto Himself a name which shall be expressive of constancy and faithfulness in the highest possible sense,—a name which every one that knew it might trust ; a name which should signify the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. And this name is Jehovah, of which Jah, the essence, hath been compounded into Jesus. By which component part, therefore, it is signified that the Jehovah of the covenant was no other than the Son, the same Divine Person who animated the child of the Virgin ; and that all things which were spoken by Jehovah, Jesus undertaketh to fulfil. That word Jah, incorporated with Hoshea in the name of our blessed Lord, is to me a pledge that all things which are written in the law and the prophets the Son of man hath come not to destroy but to fulfil. And accordingly we do find that Jesus hath applied to Him the essential meaning of Jehovah, which

is independence on all outward causes, and unalterable by time, as in Rev. xiii. 8,—“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” And again, (Heb. i. 10,) quoting from Psalm cii., “Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.” And, not to enumerate more instances, it is said of Christ (Rev. i. 8) what had just been said of the Father,—“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty,”—an expression which some have thought to be no more than a translation into Greek of the Hebrew words Jehovah Elohim, or the Lord God. Unto this much have we attained, therefore, that all the might and holiness, all the magnificence of power and splendour of operation, all the faithfulness and immovableness of purpose, together with all words whatsoever written of Jehovah and the old dispensation, are the property of Him who hath revealed Himself under the new as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, the meek, the humble, and the lowly Jesus.

The second part of this blessed name Jehoshua is Hoshea, which signifies salvation, and was added to the name Jah when the person of the Son united itself to the substance of the fallen creature for the end of redeeming and saving it; wherefore in this form of the God-man, while yet only conceived but not born, He is called Jesus, “for He shall save His people from their sins.” Though Jehovah had been known under the law as a great deliverer of His people from manifold oppressions, these deliverances had all been frustrated by their persevering disobedience, and they were now sold under the sorest bondage of all which they had ever proved, a bondage which endureth unto this day. He was known to them as yet, therefore, not as their Saviour but as their Judge, and the avenger of their wickedness. Nevertheless, in the mouth of all the prophets He had upon all occasions, and especially upon the eve of each new trial, assured them with the promise

of a new and everlasting covenant, under which He would be merciful to their unrighteousnesses, and would remember their iniquities no more, when the sin of Judah and of Israel should be sought for and should not be found; and when, together with all sin, all suffering and oppression should pass away. To execute these promises and to bring in this dispensation of eternal salvation, the virgin's Son had been promised both by Isaiah and Jeremiah; and now that the virgin's Child is conceived He receiveth the name of Jah Hoshea, Jehovah the Saviour, to assure the faithful that He, and none but He, would accomplish all these things; and accordingly Zecharias, when his tongue was loosed, did prophesy of Him in these words,—“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people: and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David: as he spake by the mouth of all his holy prophets which have been since the world began.” To this deliverance not yet accomplished unto the Jewish people, to this salvation from their sins under the penalty of which they are still suffering, there can be no doubt that the name Jesus hath a primary reference, and that it was thus understood both by the blessed virgin and by the prophet Zecharias. It would not have been proper to the Jewish economy, still in existence, to have spoken otherwise of Messiah than as He had been spoken of by all the prophets; and if He had been spoken of to them in the higher sense in which we are now to contemplate His salvation, it would have been to them unintelligible. The sense I mean is that in which all believers look upon Him as their Saviour in taking away their guilt and their judgment, and regenerating their natures, and raising them from the dead to the inheritance of eternal life and blessedness. In this higher sense of the Redeemer of the fallen creatures whom God hath chosen unto life eternal, the Jewish people were not privileged to perceive Him otherwise than through the emblems of their state and nature, and by these emblems it shall yet be taught them against the day of their glory; but to us, taught by the Spirit, it is given to understand how Jehovah became the Saviour that instant He united Himself to the seed of the woman. In taking a part of the fallen creature into union

with Himself and saving that part from the pollution of sin, the corruption of the grave, and the power of Satan, He gave assurance that God was with Him, and in Him wrought this same thing for His own glory; gave assurance that He was both purposed and able to redeem and restore with greater glory the fallen creature, to save it from sin and death, to bless it with holiness and eternal life. When the Son of God took flesh, He entered upon the travail of salvation; when He carried that flesh triumphant to the right hand of God, he finished the work. By saving His own human nature, by preserving it from the taint of sin, by delivering it from the power of Satan, by carrying it into the region of glory, He did obtain eternal redemption for us, He did receive power to destroy Him that had the power of death, and to deliver all them who through the fear of death were subject to bondage. This power of saving others proceedeth from His saving of Himself. He voluntarily brought Himself into peril by taking to Himself our nature; by being incarnate He became the champion of our salvation, by enduring the incarnation and overcoming all the creature's fallen condition, He accomplished our salvation; and from thenceforth He standeth alone the head of salvation, as He had been the head of creation,—not only Jehovah Elohim, the Lord God, but Jehovah Hoshea, the Lord the Saviour. Now this voluntary peril which the Son of God undertook was for the greatest ends of the creature's glory and of the creature's well-being,—seeing God's glory as the Creator had been obscured, and the creature's goodly condition subverted by the fall; and therefore Jehovah is not fully manifested as the Saviour until all the effects of the fall shall have been clean wrought out of creation, and the handiwork of God shall stand sinless and glorious for ever. The name Jesus, therefore, carries us far beyond anything which we behold as yet accomplished, into the future everlasting condition of God's works, when everything that defileth and maketh a lie shall be purged off into the second death of the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone for ever, and the heavens and earth which now are defiled and obscure shall with all their inhabitants, in the estate of infallible blessedness, acknowledge Jehovah their Creator to be also Jehovah their Saviour.

Save upon that human nature which He assumed, I may say that the virtue and power of the name Jesus hath not yet been exhibited. In this kind the whole work has been finished by the wonderful act of taking our nature, and going down with it into the region, first, of all temptation, and next of the grave or all corruption, and thence fetching it up and seating it in the place of all honour and all blessedness. This exaltation which will yet be done upon all the chosen ones of God, and upon all that dependeth from them in their several degrees, hath as yet been only partially done upon any one of the saints, whose souls, though they be in glory, have left their bodies under the corruption of the grave—sad memorial of their sinfulness! And we who being now in the body have the first fruits of the Spirit, do nevertheless groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body: and all the creatures groan and travail together under bondage, waiting for that same glorious manifestation of the sons of God. And if so be that the name Jesus implies salvation from that curse and thralldom of sin under which the creation is now fallen, who will say that the name will be acquitted of its full blessedness until the bodies of the saints be brought up from their graves, and the world delivered from the headship of Satan and the power of death? Now as His being born of the Virgin, and manifested as the seed of David, gave the beginning to the great work of our salvation, considered as shut up and represented in His human nature; and as the resurrection of His body from the dead gave the beginning to the work of conveying and communicating the same salvation to an elect few individuals in the gift of the Holy Ghost; even so His work of saving the Jewish nation from the hand of all their enemies will be the beginning of the work of delivering mankind from the dominion of Satan, and His being brought again into the world shall be the signal for delivering the bodies of His Church from the power of the grave. After which it only remaineth that by the judgment He should deliver all things created from the power of death; and then is the glorious name of Jesus, or Jah the Saviour, acquitted of its most precious burden.

Thus have I endeavoured, dear brethren, to set forth unto

you the meaning of the name Jesus, which the Godhead assumed in the act of taking unto itself the substance of the fallen creature, in order to save what of the fallen creatures it pleased Him to save. And now I would, by the grace of God, endeavour to draw out from what hath been said certain conclusions of doctrine and practical inferences, which the Lord may be pleased to bless unto your edification in knowledge, in faith, and in new obedience.

First, then, it is manifest from God's revealing Himself as Jesus, or the Saviour, that the creatures are in a state of condemnation and of perdition; otherwise what meaning were there in revealing Himself as their Saviour? As the name Elohim, or God the Almighty One, implies that every other one is not almighty, but of a limited power and subordinate place; and as the name Jehovah, or the Unchangeable One, implieth that all other beings are to undergo change and alteration according to His will; so doth the name Jesus, or Saviour, imply that all other beings whatsoever are in a state of condemnation and misery, from under which they need to be saved. And whence cometh this state of misery and perdition is distinctly and directly revealed in the act of giving unto Him the name,—“Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.” Be it known unto you, therefore, brethren, and of this be ye steadfastly assured, that our sins have divided between us and God, and brought us under the dominion of death and the grave, and the resurrection unto judgment, and the sentence of the second death, which nothing can avert, from which nothing can deliver and save us, but trust upon the name of Jesus, and believing in God as the only Saviour from our sins. Put away, therefore, from amongst you all confidence which is elsewhere rested than upon the name of Jesus, and otherwise proceedeth than through faith in the incarnation, and obedience, and death, and burial of the Lord Jesus Christ. Be ye assured, that if God spared not His own Son when He had assumed our fallen nature, and become a partaker of flesh and blood with the rest of the brethren, that He will not spare us who have no divine community of substance with the Father, who have no

eternal generation by the Father, who have no inhabitation of the Father's bosom, and participation of His counsel, to interest the Father for our sakes ; and if these being present in Jesus did not avert the sword of God from smiting the Shepherd, oh, how think you that we rebellious creatures can ever escape if we should neglect such great salvation ! If over Him the law laid its line of righteousness, and its plumb-line of judgment, exacting obedience unto every jot and tittle of its holy, just, and good commandments, shall it, oh, can it, be relaxed unto such as we are ! If the holiness of God was not prevented from its action and infliction upon Him who was the manifestation of His love, and grace, and glory, how shall it, how can it be silent, be inactive, be changed towards us, who are manifestations of rebellion, ingratitude, unfruitfulness, and sin ! Say then, believe then, know then, and be assured that in the way of God's holiness and justice, in the way of His law and our obedience thereto, there is nothing but condemnation and perdition for ever and for ever. Acknowledge this, and have no confidence in the flesh, or in the powers of the natural man. Say, "I am indeed a sinner, and the chief of sinners ; my righteousnesses are as filthy rags ; in all things I come short of the glory of God ; in my best estate I am but vanity. I have been feeding upon the east wind while I trusted in my own works ; and I shall continue to feed on the east wind, be parched, be blighted, be shrivelled up like the tree of the wilderness over which the east wind bloweth, so long as I shall look for any righteousness or hope for any salvation through anything which I can do for myself, or which others can do for me. I am a condemned man ; I can ask no second trial ; my mouth is shut, my doom is written, my fate is sealed." This, even this, no less, is what I require of you to believe, and to feel as the just conclusion from the name of Jesus, which the eternal revealer of God, even the Son, hath taken unto Himself under the gospel dispensation.

And now, in the second place, I call upon you to believe and to feel, that unto a world thus sealed and set apart unto condemnation God hath revealed Himself as a Saviour. As He did reveal Himself its Creator, so now revealeth He

Himself its Saviour ; and this message of reconciliation hath He committed unto me His minister to make known unto you all, that albeit ye are guilty before Him, and have no plea in your mouth, He is of such wondrous grace, and hath for the creatures of His hand such pitiful love and tender compassion, being a Sovereign withal whom no one can question, saying, "What doest Thou?" that He hath given His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life ; that He is in Jesus Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses. Believe, then, that though all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, you are justified "freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God ; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness, that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." As in my former conclusion of doctrine and practice I did entreat you to be separate from all creature trust, and to regard the whole creation of God as under the bondage of sin and death, lying in the wicked one ; so now do I entreat and invoke you to look unto Jesus, the Author and the Finisher of your faith. Receive the grace of God by Him preached, and from Him proceeding forth. Receive the pardon of your guilt written in His blood and sealed with the key of David, which openeth and no man shutteth, which shutteth and no man openeth. As the prisoner no more doubteth when the reprieve of his sovereign cometh under the great seal of the kingdom by the hands of the king's proper messenger ; so doubt ye no more, let the world doubt no more after it hath received the good news of salvation by the Son of God, to this very end appointed by His name Jesus, and for the assurance of this very thing constituted by His union, His inseparable and indivisible union with the nature of the creatures which had been imprisoned under the sentence of the law of the Jehovah King, the Unchangeable One. Ah ! is it not as if to some poor, doubting, disbelieving woman under sentence of

death, the king's son, that he might give her fast assurance and chase away her despair, should wed himself to her, join himself as one, that her poor fainting heart might be reassured? So did Christ, in order to convince the children of mother Eve, who in their mother's transgression had transgressed, and in their mother's sentence had been doomed, come and wed Himself, His eternal divinity, unto the seed of mother Eve, that the family, all the family, might truly know and feel assured that they had found grace in the sight of God, and were beloved because He is Love, and can love what in itself is all unlovely. And now I ask you to believe that you are saved in Christ; to rejoice and hold up your heads, because you are redeemed; to go on and rejoice, and prosper, and do exploits under that banner of salvation which He hath displayed because of the truth.

And now, finally, with respect to the manner of conveying this salvation which He wrought out by His obedience unto the death, we have to observe that it is not by giving out of Himself unto another, but by bringing that other into Himself that the communication of the blessedness proceedeth. To give unto us an existence out of Himself is the work of creation. To bring the thing created into union, into oneness with Himself, is the work of redemption, which therefore proceeded by joining unto Himself, by taking up into hypostatical union with Himself the nature of man. And every one who is redeemed is in like manner taken up into union with His human nature, so as to be one with Him as He is one with the Father. But this union of the redeemed ones unto Christ is not of the same kind as the union of His human nature unto His divine. The human nature of Christ is a part of His personal, and shall continue so for ever; but not so is it with His saved ones, who are separate persons from Christ, though of the same substance with His human nature unto which they are consubstantiated by the Holy Ghost proceeding from Him to this very end of bringing them into union with Him, just as the seed of plants hath power to assimilate unto itself the elemental substances on which it feeds, and so to produce many seeds and many plants of the like kind. Or to preserve our similitude still more correct, as the

one stem of the vine hath power through the appropriation unto itself of elemental matters to put forth many branches, whereon grow the clusters of ripe fruit ; so doth Christ the true vine of the Father's planting, of the Father's dressing, by operation of the Holy Spirit upon the creature produce many separate persons in His own likeness, many branches growing out of and unto Himself. In their union with Him standeth their fertility, and being separated from Him they are good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under the foot of men. The Holy Spirit, therefore, which proceedeth from Christ doth unite us unto Christ, and enable us to abide in Him,—doth not unite us unto the Godhead of the Son, but doth unite us to the manhood of Christ. And the completeness of the saved ones will be accomplished at His coming ; after which, if I err not, the manner of this salvation will somewhat change. For I reckon there is a dignity and a closeness in the union between Christ and His elect or bridal Church which now is suffering with Him and for Him, that there is not between Him and the numerous hosts which shall come and be joined unto Him in the age to come, of which He is declared to be the Father ; whereas of the Church that now is He is the husband. But still as the children are of the same substance with their parents, so shall the innumerable company of the saints in the age to come be taken out of the stock of an evil nature subject unto death, and brought into the stock of a redeemed nature which hath triumphed over death ; and so all the saved ones are saved by being taken out of the sinful mass and consubstantiated with that atom, so to speak, of redeemed substance which the Son joined unto Himself, and which the Father gave to have life in itself. And as Christ the great quickener, the eternal life manifested, doth thus draw unto Himself those whom the Father giveth Him out of that separateness and wickedness in which they are by nature, and so doth save them in Himself, not out of Himself ; even in like manner do these same saved ones draw up along with them this world which was made for man, with its sun, and moon, and stars, and fish and flying fowl, and living creatures, to the utter exclusion of death and extinction of sin and misery ; and then the work of creation will appear

to have been but the rudiments of and preparation for the work of redemption by the manifestation of Jehovah under the name of Jesus.

And now, brethren, before I close, allow me to express, in a few words, the heartfelt satisfaction with which I return to my charge over your souls, and to the labours of the ministry in this city. The tidings which I received from time to time of your love and fellowship in the Lord, of your constancy in the duties of public worship, did afford me great consolation in my absence ; and a good report concerning you is, I may say, spread abroad amongst the churches. In which let us rejoice together. Let us remark with gratitude the hand of God in sending amongst us ministers of good and honourable report, in whose mouth the substance of the doctrine which I teach hath been confirmed. And now let us proceed with renewed confidence in the great Head of the Church, to hold up in this city a banner for the truth. Let us go on unto perfection, and not stop until we reach the stature of a perfect man in Christ. You may desire naturally to know what reception the word which I preached met with in our native land and in our mother Church. Everywhere, I may truly say, the people heard me gladly, and from the ministers of the gospel I received much brotherly kindness ; for all which I return thanks this day to the great Head of the Church. I preached unto them the coming of the Lord in judgment, little thinking that I should witness any act of His judgment ; but so it was, the Lord did lift up His hand and make a breach in the midst of the congregation. It is a fearful thing, let me tell you, brethren, to witness such an awful sight ; but oh, if those days of judgment and of visitation be so near at hand, what sights more awful await our eyes ! If those days be at hand concerning which it is said, that unless they were shortened no flesh should be saved, oh, then, what death, what destruction, what ruin, may we not be prepared to see ! Enter, oh enter, then, into your chambers, ye people of the Lord, and shut your doors and hide yourselves as it were for a little moment until the indignation be overpast. Have I not preached unto you this day the name of Jesus, that Rock of refuge and high

tower of salvation? Flee unto Him speedily, speedily, who hath been the dwelling-place of His people in all generations. Everything shall change but Jehovah, everything shall perish which is not united unto Jehovah the Saviour. There is no other name given under heaven whereby men must be saved but the name of Jesus; and every one who knoweth His name will put his trust in Him. Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Amen and amen.

### XXIII.

#### GOD'S GLORY IN THE CHURCH.

**T**HE more I consider the subject of the invisible Church, or the election according to grace, taking the Scriptures for my guide, the more am I convinced that it can in no wise be separated from Christ, but hath its being in Him according to the eternal purpose of God, hath its manifestation in Him by the life of the Holy Ghost, and shall have its blessedness in Him through all eternity ; and that as He was the chosen one from amongst the sons of men, with whom the eternal divinity of the Word might subsist in consubstantial union, to the glory of the Father, so those who are the election according to grace are the chosen ones in whom the Holy Spirit, which sustained His humanity, may subsist, to the glory of the Son, and through Him to the glory of the Father. So that it is not Christ and the Church two separate things, but Christ with the Church included in Him one thing, though manifested in succession ; even as the vine and the branches are one, growing from the same root and for the same end of fruit-bearing, though coming into existence in succession. And as the stem of the tree which beareth nothing is for the branches which bear the fruit, and the branches again nothing without the tree, but both together a magnificent work of God for a good and wise end ; so Christ and His Church must be taken together to constitute that full manifestation of the grace of God, and mercy and love of God, for which, doubtless, sin was permitted to come into the world, or, indeed, any apostasy to be found among the creatures of God. This great truth of the inclusion of the Church and every member thereof in Christ, in order to the manifestation of the grace of

God, hath been more than ever impressed upon my mind by the study of the Epistle to the Ephesians, in which this mystery is more completely unfolded than in any other part of Scripture. And I do now request your patient attention to the word of God, while I endeavour to open up three texts in this epistle which speak particularly of the great end of the Church in the purpose of God.

Chap. i. 3-11, the apostle blesseth God for all that succession of benefits which he is about to enumerate; yet not the God of Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob, because of this kind of blessing no family but the family of Christ hath the heirship, but the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that not in the sense of eternal generation, but in the manhood, after the resurrection, when He was declared to be the Son of God with power. And for what blesseth he the God and Father of the risen Son of man? Because He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places (or simply in the heavens) in Christ. These blessings are in the heavens, not in the earthlies, and they are there in Christ, and yet we who are on earth are blessed with them. And how is that otherwise than by our inclusion in Him and our perfect unity with Him? So that what He possesseth we possess, though He be in the glory of heaven, and we in the humility of the earth;—our oneness with Him being comparable to nothing but His oneness with the Father; of whom, while upon earth, He could say, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;” and of His disciples He saith, “That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. . . . I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.” There can be no doubt that these blessings in heavenly places are as yet inherited and possessed only by the Head of the Church, into whose hands are given the power and the glory; and, therefore, how we can be blessed with them otherwise than by that mystical union with Christ which is set forth to us continually in the holy communion, I know not. And that the apostle did intend this and no other solution of the apparent incongruity of making creatures on the earth blessed with blessings in the heavenly places, is evident by his adding “in Christ,”—“who hath blessed us with

all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." But it is further manifest from what followeth, where our being in Him is carried to the highest possible certainty, which is the purpose of the Father, and to the highest possible antiquity, which is the eternal being of God, before the foundation of the world—"according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." In order to constitute a choice there must be others out of whom to choose, and upon whom the choice doth not fall. This, which is contained in the very idea of choice, is expressed also in the original, which is not simply chosen, but chosen out of,—“according as he hath chosen us out in him ;” that is to say, chosen us out of the apostasy into which all creatures that would not stand by trusting in the Christ, who is the end of creation, but in their own creature powers, must necessarily fall. Into which apostasy, marked by its constitution in Adam, have all fallen ; and from which fall or apostasy, we who are chosen out, are chosen out in the Christ before the foundation of the world—not only before the apostasy of man, and before the apostasy of angels, but before the foundation of the creation ; before the procession of the Word and the Spirit to create the world. Even from everlasting, in the purpose of God, were all elect creatures chosen in Christ, as they do stand in Christ who stand, and are recovered into Christ who were permitted to fall out of him, for the manifestation of Christ, and in Him for the manifestation of the purpose of God. Now, to what are we chosen in Christ ? Saith the apostle,—to be “holy and without blame before Him [in His presence, or in His sight] in love.” Though this no doubt hath its first intention and fulfilment in the present life, in which we are to be holy as God is holy, it also carries my mind further than the present imperfect state—to that state when we shall be presented unblameable in holiness before God even our Father, at the coming of the Lord. And that this is in the apostle’s mind is further manifest from that which he immediately addeth, “having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself ;” which is undoubtedly a future condition of the saints, according to what the apostle saith elsewhere, that “we who have

the first-fruits of the Spirit do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of the body;" and again, "all the creation groaneth and travaileth in bondage, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." The act which is presently manifested is our election, which, being purposed from the foundation of the world, is now manifested in the Church, or the election. But the adoption is not yet manifested, though we have the spirit of it, whereby we cry "Abba, Father." Even as Christ was the chosen One during His life, holy and blameless before His Father in love, so are we now chosen ones in Him, to be holy and blameless before Him in love. And as He was not declared to be the Son of God with power but by His resurrection from the dead, so we who are now called the sons of God are still hidden under a veil to the eye of all but Christ, and God, and the Holy Spirit,—not known one of another, and disallowed of the world; and shall not appear in the proper raiment, and dignity, and portion of sons, until He who is our life shall appear, and we shall appear with Him in glory, seeing Him as He is. Now this adoption of sons is said to be "by" or through "Jesus Christ unto Himself;" whereas the election was said to be "in Him," for the reason that the decree of election contemplates us in Christ, as the members are in the body, or the fruit in the tree; but the adoption contemplates us as fallen out of the family of God into an apostasy, and restored thereunto by the way of Christ, who voluntarily came forth into the same apostate condition, in order that He might become the way through which the election might be recovered into union with God. Every prodigal outcast child returneth by or through Christ into union with the Father, according to what is written, "No man cometh unto the Father but through me." And then, when by Christ we are recovered unto Himself, we obtain and have that inheritance of spiritual blessings in heavenly places, which are now in Christ, and by us possessed only in virtue of our election in Christ, and present union with Him by the Spirit, and preservation in Him by the mighty power of God, until the adoption, when we shall stand in God, as the Son of man now standeth in God, and have the fellowship of the fulness of His inheritance.

To this is added the cause and only cause of the whole : “according to the good pleasure of His will”—according as it seemed good to the will of Him “who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.” Not according to our works, nor yet according to our faith ; for that of which the apostle is speaking is before all existence and being, ere yet the foundation of the world was laid, while there was nothing but the will of God to give origin, and form, and constitution unto all things. According to that will, then, according to that which seemed good in His own sight, doth our election in Christ unto holiness, and our predestination unto adoption, and our blessing with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, proceed. And than this, which is the cause of itself and of all things, can no higher cause be sought, as it was said by our Lord in the flesh, “Even so, Father ; for so it seemed good in thy sight.” To look for anything beyond this, is to look for something before or above the will of God ; to desire anything more righteous, is to dethrone the righteous One ; to seek for anything more wise, is to perfect foolishness ; and to be discontent with this, is to practise and foment rebellion. But when the Lord saith, “Even so, Father ; for so it seemed good in thy sight,” He straightway addeth, “All things are delivered unto me of my Father ; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him ;” and this He added in order to teach all men that in Him the mystery of the Father’s will was disclosed, and through Him alone was it to be revealed ; in whose life, death, and resurrection, and ascension into glory, and in the words of whose gospel of life we have that will of God made known for our salvation, and the decree opened unto all who will receive it in all its absoluteness, and enter into it in all its fulness and freeness, giving the glory unto God, and assigning the cause to the sole good pleasure of His will.

Next cometh that which it more especially concerneth us to know—the end which God purposed in Himself by the Church thus elected, thus manifested, and thus to be adopted and eternally blessed ; which end must be the manifestation of something in Himself which could not

otherwise be made known. And what is this peculiar attribute of God which the Church of Christ is constituted in order to make known? It is stated in the next clause, and over again stated many times in this epistle, to be "to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." In Christ the glory of His holiness appeared, but no part of His grace; but in every Christian appeareth the glory of that favour with which we are favoured in the Beloved. All those who are chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, and ordained to the adoption of sons, though heirs of wrath, even as others, and apostate from the faith of Christ, as all men by nature are, and rebellious to the will of God, are freely forgiven, and fully pardoned, redeemed, adopted, and made for ever blessed in the full enjoyment of God through all eternity, on account of the beloved One; who is so well beloved, as for His sake the Father doth love all who put their trust in Him. And therefore is He to be trusted in, because He hath in Himself the fountain of the fulness of the love of God, the unsearchable riches of the grace of God, from which all we have received, and grace for grace. This is the end of the Church, to receive from that fountain, and to be enriched with those riches, to live upon them, and to manifest them forth unto all, that the creatures may know the love with which God loveth Christ and all who put their trust in Christ; and so by the Church and in the Church praise may abound unto God for His unspeakable grace. I do not enter into the formal discourse of this grace, being rather minded at present to shew you how constantly this is given out as the proper end and object of the Church in her present condition. And therefore we follow on the thread of our apostle's thoughts; who straightway openeth certain of the glorious and most praiseworthy tokens of that grace which the Church hath received. First, condescending upon the absolution of our sins: "in whom we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins, according to the riches of his grace." This redemption—better translated absolution—hath reference to defilement, not to bondage, indicating that the first act of God's favour in Christ is to wash away our defilement, and dismiss all our sins; which is

justification, the first step in our advancement and high promotion in the heavenly places ; as was shewn by our Lord's submitting to baptism before entering on His ministry, and by His appointing baptism as the door of entrance into His visible Church, which is the type and emblem of the Church spiritual, whose names are written in heaven ; as is continually declared throughout all the Scriptures, and fulfilled in the experience of all saints, who with one accord do witness that there is no peace till they be assured of their absolution by the blood of Christ, and the putting away of all their sins. This the apostle declareth to be according to the riches of His grace,—without any claim or title of any kind, without any merit or deserving in us, without any work previously foreseen or actually performed by us ; but freely and fully, according to the riches of that favour with which He hath favoured us in the Beloved. And therefore we leave all things, and cleave unto Christ ; therefore we forsake all trust in everything besides, and trust in Him only ; because He alone hath that to give which our soul yearneth to possess. But and if it could elsewhere be obtained, sure am I it would be elsewhere sought ; therefore, for the deliverance of poor abused souls, as well as for the promulgation of God's only verity, is it most necessary to declare that the beloved One hath that only which can save the soul from the apostasy of nature and the perdition of eternal death. The apostle, having mentioned this grace the second time, cannot leave it without a further declaration of its abundant blessings ; and next to that absolution which hath been mentioned, he addeth what is little thought of in these times, which are content to call the former the whole gospel, and are grown impatient of anything beyond. Not so our apostle, who further declareth of this grace, that it “hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence.” This wisdom and prudence, or rather understanding, (for prudence properly referreth to action, whereas both the original word and the apostle's argument refer to the mind itself,) which the apostle presenteth as the second act of grace unto the Church, consisteth in the illumination of the Spirit, denominated, a few verses onward, “the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of

Christ ;" and by means of this gift, he immediately addeth, is the Church made to know "the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself." And he further addeth what this mystery of His will is, but not until he has delivered that will of God from all outward influence, by declaring that it rested upon nothing but its own good pleasure, consisting in that which was good in His own eyes, and was laid in Himself, not out of Himself, for ends of His own glory, and nothing else ; for what else was there to consult for ? Oh that men would consider this, and turn from their own vain schemes and false wills, to inquire reverently into the mystery of the scheme of God, and honour His most holy will, that ever-flowing fountain of all wisdom, and goodness, and grace, and truth, and mercy, and love, which now hath been revealed in Christ, and ever floweth by the Holy Spirit into the Church.

Having thus again well guarded this holy fountain of all being, the stream of the apostle's wisdom then floweth on and expandeth itself into a smooth and open pool, in the depths of which the whole spiritual vault is reflected. I mean in the next verse, where he declareth that mystery of the will of God, which He had purposed to Himself, because it so seemed good unto Him, to be this,—which I translate literally and verbally, because it is so important,—“against the economy of the fulness of the times to head up the whole in the Christ, both that are in the heavens and that are upon the earth.” The figure is, that all things are at present lying like scattered and disjointed members, some in the heavens and others upon the earth ; and that there is a Head over them, even Christ ; and that there is a time coming when these fragments of the whole shall be all gathered to the Head, and recomposed under this Head, and stand firm and stable in Him without any further defection or apostasy ; that is, not, as the Universalists say, all being and existency, but all who have obtained an inheritance through Christ in that great ingathering of the good from the midst of the prostrate evil. This is to take place against the economy of the fulness of the times, not of *the time*, as it is in Galatians when speaking of Christ's coming, but of *the times*, as it is when

our Lord speaketh of the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled, and, before His ascension, that it was not for the apostles to know the times and the seasons which had to run before His coming again to restore the kingdom unto Israel. And Paul regards it as the great proof of the abundance of grace unto the Church, to have received insight into this great consummation and heading up of things heavenly and earthly, into which the religious world that now standeth for the Church holdeth it all iniquity to inquire, and all impiety to expect the shadow of a revelation. But the true Church hath not so learned Christ ; for it is to this consummation that she looketh forward, and in this consummation that she receiveth an inheritance, as the apostle addeth immediately, "To head up the whole in the Christ, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." This inheritance we hold against that time of consummation, but have not yet obtained, for it is afterwards subjoined that the Spirit is our pledge or earnest of it, our ineftment, as we would say, by spiritual instruments, which we must be content to hold until a certain future time, called the redemption or absolution of the purchased possession. The Son must be openly adopted and declared in the face of all the world before He can enter into the inheritance ; but He may receive from the Father some pledge of His purpose before that time, in the possession of which He rejoiceth and trusteth to His faithfulness. In Christ, therefore, the Church inheriteth, and shall possess, against the economy of the fulness of the times, being foreordained according to purpose ; not depending upon accident, but standing in the purpose as an essential and constituent part thereof ; and that, too, the purpose of Him who worketh all according to the counsel of His own will ; whom, therefore, nothing can control, whom also nothing can escape ; whom all things obey harmoniously together. Wherefore, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predes-

minate, them he also called : and whom he called, them he also justified : and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how much more shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Such, dear brethren, is the view which is given us of the Church of Christ, her origin, her end, her privileges, her offices, in this part of the epistle to the Ephesians; but in order to shew you how constantly this is the language of the Spirit, I have to bring forward two other passages thereof, that ye may see how necessary it is to enter into these things if we would not strip and bereave, and utterly annihilate the Holy Scriptures, concerning which there is in these times so much zeal without knowledge, and in the exposition of them so much display with little understanding. For, brethren, I am resolved, by God's grace, that ye shall not, without a witness, read the word of God hastily and without consideration. The further, I say, to convince you that the glory of God's attribute of grace is the great end of the Church, and no secondary or inferior object of rewarding good works, or compassionating human wretchedness, or even of destroying sin, (which are all links in the chain of effects, or objects attained by the way, and in the progress of the great end, but not the great end itself,) I request your attention to two other passages in this wonderful epistle : of which take first the 5th, 6th, and 7th verses of the 2d chapter, where, after representing the former darkness and sinfulness and death of the saints, and faithful in Christ Jesus, whom he addresseth, including himself among the number, he thus declareth the same mystery :—"When we were dead in sins, he quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus : that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness [bountifulness] to us in Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God." Whosoever will consider this text will find in it a marvellous confirmation of what hath been said above. It represents the elect

as dead in sin, and Christ coming to that same state of death under the load of their sins, that He might be in all things like unto them ; Christ's natural body in the tomb being the symbol of His mystical body as it is found in the state of nature. Thus, saith the apostle, when He was raised from the dead, and set at God's right hand in the heavenlies, by the working of His mighty power in the Spirit, we were quickened along with Him, (for it is by the grace of God, not by any power of ours, this mighty work of our salvation proceedeth;) and when He was raised from the dead, we were raised along with Him, and we were made to sit along with Him in those heavenlies, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but in that which is to come. And all this was done in Him for us, who are His body, to the end that in the ages to come, (that is, dear brethren, not ages of men, as of thirty or one hundred years each, but ages of which one hath not yet told out its period, for we live still in the present age, or world as it is rendered, and the first age to come hath not yet arrived, neither will arrive till the day of the glorious advent,)—in the ages or worlds to come, He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in bountifulness upon us in Christ Jesus ; the end of quickening, raising, and setting us with Christ above all dignities, being no less than by that most conspicuous monument to declare the exceeding riches of His free and undeserved favour, pouring itself through the channel of the beloved Son upon the dead and the rebellious, and the godless, and the hopeless, and for His sake, and in His faith, and to His honour, exalting them to the fellowship of His highest place in the heavenly, or as we would say the over-heavenly places or conditions. "For," addeth the apostle, "it is by grace we are saved, by means of faith, and this not from us, God's gift ; not from works, that no one may boast ; for we are His workmanship, being created in Christ Jesus upon good works, which God had fore-arranged for us to walk in them." O my brethren, what volumes are written in these words ! I am overwhelmed with their power and fullness while I have sought to render them out of the original Greek, of which widest language the utmost flexibility is used

to comprehend the idea of that grace concerning which we have to discourse. It was not enough to have therein the truth, "by grace are ye saved," unto the beginning of the climax of our exaltation with Christ, nor yet to have added it as the great end and attainment of the whole work of God in the Church—to reveal to after ages His grace in His bountifulness upon us in Christ Jesus; but He doth hold the doctrine of our salvation by grace to be so important as to be taken up again and set forth apart in an exact definition, explanation, and defence against all opposite doctrine. We are saved by grace through means of faith; but lest this mention of the channel of faith, through which the grace doth flow to us, might, as it hath done, and constantly doth, become the occasion of man's arrogating some share of the work, and the merit of the work of salvation to himself, the apostle addeth, And this, God's gift, not of ourselves; that is, this faith, (for though a learned doctor in our Church hath argued that it meant this thing, or this salvation, because the word is in the neuter gender, I argue that it is so to agree with the word gift, which, as every scholar knows, is not only permitted but proper,)—this faith, God's gift, not proceeding of ourselves; not of works, that no one may boast; proceeding from faith to faith, to the honour of Christ, more and more revealed, more and more believed on; not from work to work, to the honour of ourselves, and to our own boasting; but in respect to works, saith he, let no one boast, because we are His work, or piece of workmanship; as it is written in another place, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in us, to will and to do of his good pleasure;" being created in Christ Jesus (as it is written again, "whosoever is in Christ is a new creature") on good works, which God prepared beforehand for us to walk therein. That is, every one saved by grace is so of God's free gift, and by an act of God's creating power, whereby he is made and fashioned to a certain outward form, or mould of good works, or conformity to a holy law which God himself hath fore-ordained and arranged for all the children of Christ to walk in. And to this end, before bringing Christ to the grave, He caused Him to give the pattern of these good works, unto

which, as to a mould, the Spirit of Christ would fashion the lives of all the children of Christ. These few words of the apostle convey to me a clearer conviction than all the elaborate argumentation of the epistles to the Romans and Galatians to the same effect. I would have you to study it more than we can do at present, when we have introduced the passage to shew that the manifestation of His grace is the great end of God in purposing to choose a church in Christ, as it is the great cause of its separation, and the great means of its preservation.

There is one other passage which further confirmeth this doctrine, and doth, as it were, complete the view given by the apostle of the end of the Church in this epistle. It is written in chapter iii., verse 10, and occurreth in the following connexion. Having shewn to these Ephesians the grace into which they had been brought by the death, resurrection, and exaltation of Christ, and their free admission into the one body of Christ, which had been slain, quickened, and exalted to glory, he sheweth them that herein stood his honour in the Church of Christ, that to him the dispensation of the grace of God toward the Gentiles was intrusted; and to qualify him for the preaching of the same, the mystery which in other generations had not been made known unto the sons of men, but now is revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, was made known unto him by revelation—viz., that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel: and then, he addeth, most humbly and yet most sublimely, “To me, who am the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men to see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in the heavenlies, might be known by the church the manifold [or multifarious] wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose [or according to the purpose of the ages] which he made in Christ Jesus our Lord.” This account of the end and purpose of the Church is also very grand and sublime,

and in perfect harmony with what hath gone before. The apostle first defines his office to the Gentiles—"to preach the good tidings of the riches of Christ," which are unsearchable, past finding out, or not to be circumscribed by any definition of thought or word ; and then he sheweth what his office was to all, not all men merely, but all beings in the widest sense—"to enlighten all what is the fellowship of the mystery that had been hidden from the ages in God." A mystery, in the language of those times, was the name for the more secret truths of the heathen religions, which were not opened save to the initiated or enlightened. Such a mystery, saith the apostle, had been hid in God from the ages. The word "ages" is very hard to be understood, and was the occasion of many wild speculations of the early heretics. Its common use is, to denote the present constitution of the world under sin and misery, compared with its future condition under righteousness and peace—the one called the age that is, the other, the age that is to come ; or, as it is commonly rendered, "in this world and in that which is to come." From this its common use we ought to conclude that it signifies the various stages which God's handiworks pass through in their progress towards that stability into which they are bringing, and into which they shall all be brought, under Christ the manifest God. When it is said, therefore, that this mystery had been hid from the ages, I think it is signified that it had been hid from the constitutions of being which till that time had been created ; which ages or constitutions of being, it is said in the Hebrews, were made by Christ—"by whom also He made the worlds ;" not the heavenly bodies, as we suppose, from astronomical speculation, for the Jews had no such idea, nor the Gentiles either, but the ages, or those various constitutions and successive changes of being which had been and were proceeding. This mystery, which had been veiled up from the ages, the apostle declareth was opened unto him by express revelation, and he was appointed to dispense it,—“a dispensation of the grace of God is given to me ;” that is, to teach and make known unto all, and enlighten them in respect to the fellowship or community or participation thereof ; for he declareth that up to this time it had been hid in God, that created all

by Jesus Christ, and in the act of creating wrapped the mystery up until that same Jesus Christ should be revealed, in whom He purposed to manifest the mystery ; wherefore it is called in the 4th verse "the mystery of the Christ, which in other ages [but the word here is simply generations—"which in other generations"] was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." And then follows, in the 10th verse, the end of disclosing it to these holy apostles and prophets, and, above all the rest, to the apostle Paul :—"To the intent that now, to the principalities and powers in the heavenlies, might be known through the church the manifold wisdom of God." It had been hid from the ages or appointed revolutions of time and being until this present time, waiting for the constitution of the Church or the election,—that new form of creation, so to speak, called the regeneration,—that through her means, or in her, might be made known to the beginnings and the liberties (for these are the true meanings of the words rendered principalities and powers) in the heavenlies, the manifold wisdom of God. These intelligences in the heavenly places, called beginnings and powers, are so called, I judge, from their being the first works of the Creator, which, not having any material forms, could only be expressed by such words as beginnings or principles, and powers or liberties, or laws of being, which do not express any material subsistency. And, in order to postpone and undervalue them, it is that Christ is called the beginning, and said to have been in the beginning and the creation of these constitutions or orders of being. These, whatever they are, take a lesson from the Church ; which, by the apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, and others, to whom it was revealed, did receive the fellowship of the mystery, to preserve the same, and manifest it to the intelligence of these celestial, or rather super-celestial beings. And what is it she is to manifest ? The manifold or multifarious wisdom of God. What is this wisdom ? This question will be best answered by reading, along with me, the 6th to the 10th verses of the 2d chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians :—"We speak wisdom among the perfect :

not, however, the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, that come to nought: but we speak God's wisdom that had been hidden in mystery, which God fore-ordained before the ages for our glory: which no one of the rulers of this age knew: for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, what God hath prepared for them that love him. To us, however, God hath unveiled by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, and the depths of God," &c. From this, and it is the constant language of Scripture, both in the Old and New Testaments, we conclude that this manifold or multifarious wisdom of God which by the Church is made known to these super-celestial principles and powers of being, is that which is revealed to us by the Holy Ghost, is truly the substance of the Holy Spirit, as He is manifested in the Church; and it is added, that all this is "according to the purpose of the ages, which purpose He made in Christ Jesus our Lord." The purpose of the ages is the purpose in their creation; which purpose He formed in Christ Jesus, by whom He created these ages or constitutions of being.

Further into this subject, dear brethren, I cannot enter, for want of time; but enough has been said to shew you the infinite importance of the Church of Christ in the Divine purpose and the Divine dispensation. These expositions are, as it were, but illustrations of the great doctrine of our union with Christ contained in the sacrament of the Supper, and demonstrations of the great trust which is committed to us under Christ, of shewing forth the glory of the grace of God in the forgiveness of our sins, and the endowment of the Spirit. Therefore, dear brethren, rejoice, and give praise, and make mention of the goodness of the Lord, as those who have been washed from your sins, and search into the mystery which hath been revealed unto us by the holy apostles of the Lord. Remember what great things the Lord expecteth of you, and for what great ends of His glory we are elected out of the world, that we may be holy and without blame before Him

in love. I have shewn you what great honour belongeth to the Church of Christ. Bear it in your mind continually, and continually seek the Lord, that we may be enabled to fulfil it. And, O brethren, remember in all your prayers one that feels himself utterly unworthy and unable to bear the burden of this ministry as it ought to be borne. And let us together travail in the fulfilment of this most honourable, yet most weighty, charge which hath been committed to us of Christ our Head, and for which alone we have any separation from that wicked apostasy in which we were heretofore found even as others. And now may the Lord enable us to fulfil all His will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight, and by us bringing glory to His Father and to our Father, to His God and to our God. Amen and amen.

## XXIV.

### ON THE DEATH OF CHILDREN.

2 SAM. XII. 15-24.

*And Nathan departed unto his house. And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. David therefore besought God for the child, &c., &c.*

**B**ELIEVING, as it is written, that no one of Christ's members ought to suffer for himself, or to rejoice for himself, but for the sake of the whole body, which is the Church, I have endeavoured, by the grace of God, to set my own sorrows to a side, and to address myself to the work of edifying God's people in that mysterious part of His providence under which so many of you are now, have been, or are yet to be fellow-sufferers with myself; and to this end I have chosen, as the subject of my discourse, this event in the history of David's sufferings, upon which I would make a few remarks before proceeding to treat of the death of infants in general.

This child whom the Lord struck was begotten in adultery, and was the innocent occasion of murder, and on these accounts it was that the Lord struck it;—which is another instance of the visitation of the sins of the parents upon the children, and a principal part of the mystery which I have to unfold. \* I observe further, that this child, though conceived in adultery, the occasion of murder, and the object of God's stroke, was nevertheless taken into the habitations of the blessed dead, seeing the royal prophet and man after God's own heart doth say of him, "I shall go to him;" which proveth to us, that though in the present life the innocent infant may suffer with and for its parents, in the life that is to come it is regarded by God as standing in itself alone; and that the

most unfortunate of infants in their birth and in their life may, after their death, pass at once into the most blessed of the saints of God. I observe, thirdly, that this most tender-hearted of parents, and most large-hearted of the prophets of God, having, no doubt, perfect knowledge of the controversy which God had with him concerning this child, did yet address himself to appease the wrath of God by all manner of penitential acts and sorrowful expressions of his spirit by fasting and weeping, and lying all night upon the earth, and refusing to be comforted by the elders of his house ; which teacheth us the proper way of interceding with God when His hand is stretched out upon us or upon our children. Yet, nevertheless, when it is God's will to take, He will take, even though the man after His own heart should lie low before Him in sackcloth and ashes. And, finally, I observe upon the particular case before us, the carriage of this most gifted prophet of God, but fallible man : after that the Lord's deed had been declared unto him, he arose from the earth, and washed and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord and worshipped ; then he came to his own house, and when he required they set bread before him and he did eat ; which holy example of resignation I consider to be no less instructive to us and acceptable to God, yea, and trying to self, than was the act of humiliation which preceded it.

But that you may understand more perfectly the prophetic mystery of this dark passage in the life of king David, and perceive how his fall was overruled to God's glory, and the instruction of the Church, I ask your heed to another observation before entering upon the general subject of discourse. The event in the history of David's family which immediately preceded his fall in the matter of Bathsheba was the cursing of his wife Michal, the daughter of Saul, with barrenness, because she had despised him in her heart when he leaped and danced before the ark of God, upon its going up from the house of Obed-edom the Gittite to the tabernacle which he had prepared for it at Jerusalem. This sojourn of the ark for a season under the roof of a Gentile man, before it was placed in the high temple of king Solomon, is a type

of the Church of Christ being for a season preserved among the Gentiles, as Saul the anointed king, whom David was anointed to supersede, is, from the time of David's anointing, a type of the Gentile kings who hold their government under Christ.

This example of David, who came up to the house of God and worshipped after he had seen the purpose of God made manifest to his house, doth, I feel, justify me this day in standing in my place amongst the worshippers of God and fulfilling my wonted offices as a minister of Christ. And though it cost me much, I deem it both an act of piety towards God and of carefulness over you, that I should this day justify in your hearing that most mysterious of His ways which is shewn forth in the death of infants. In fulfilling which function of the ministerial calling, I shall first shew in general the light which is thereby cast upon the purpose and work of God; and, secondly, the profit which is thereby derived to the present estate of the Church.

The first great lesson which is taught unto believers by the death of infants, yea, and forced in upon the mind of all men, is to know the nature of our present fallen condition. Had there not been the death of infants before they were conscious of good or ill, we might have believed that suffering and death were the consequence of our personal sinfulness, and not the natural inheritance of all mankind; but being, as it is, that the greater number of the human race are removed in infancy and childhood, it is made manifest, indeed, with a witness, that man is conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity, and all his days lying under the primeval curse—"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The honour and the truth of that word of God is justified by the death of infants; for if an infant die before it hath done iniquity, yea, and hath suffered before it hath drawn the breath of life, what can we say, but that the root being unholy the branches are all unholy, and the lump being unholy the fragments are all unholy? Now, brethren, I do regard this lesson of the innate sinfulness and deadness of the creature to be so fundamental an article of faith, so needful, so indispensable to the understanding of God's glory

and work in Jesus Christ, that to comprehend it, and feel it, and act under it continually, I would not grudge all the sorrow and disappointment which the loss of two unconscious infants hath caused me. And what I say for myself I may say for the Church in general : that to be kept mindful of the same truth, and to have it put beyond a question, she should not grudge the loss of all her infants who die between the time of their baptism and the time of their ripeness for catechetical instruction. But, grudge or not grudge, the fact remaineth the same, that God, to shew forth the intrinsical sinfulness and deadness of the creature man, doth cut him off and take him away from our sight by corruption at all times of life, from the first day of conception, upwards and onwards, whenever it seemeth His own pleasure to do so. And had it been otherwise ordered, that mankind should not have been cut off by death till they were capable of the knowledge of good and evil, we may rest well assured that the doctrine of original sin and guiltiness would never have been received by any ; which, alas ! even as it is received by so few, and not being received completely, precludes the end of God in Christ from being understood, and consequently the salvation of man through Christ from proceeding. So that I may say, the death of infants is God's eternal ordinance for attesting and shewing forth the fundamental truth, or rather the first truth, of that great system of truth, whereof the manifestation of Himself in Christ, and the communication of Himself by the Holy Ghost unto the creatures, is the great and only end.

This leadeth us to observe, secondly, that by the death of infants while unconscious of good or ill, is shewn forth the freeness of the grace of God in Jesus Christ : for, as men would, and indeed must, have concluded that suffering and death were the consequence of actual transgression, had there been no death of infants innocent of all actual transgression ; so, likewise, in that case would they and must they have concluded that all reward and blessedness, whether in this world or the world to come, were the consequence of our own good works and deservings. I say, *must* have concluded so ; for the reason, that it is necessary to the very existence of a scheme of providence, that there should be punishment con-

nected with evil, and reward connected with good conduct ; and of the scheme of grace also it is an essential part, that righteousness should attend upon faith, and a reward follow upon both ; so that both in the world and in the Church there would have been room and occasion too,—yea, and when you take into consideration the selfish nature of man, there would have been a perfect certainty, of the universal prevalence of the Arminian doctrine, that our good works foreseen by God would enter into the elements of His counsel, and form a ground of His purpose according to election. But by the death of infants, while the doctrine of original guilt and deadness is substantiated in the sight, and brought home to the feelings of all, by the same ordinance of God's providence, combined with the ordinance of baptism in the Church, the doctrine of His salvation in Christ Jesus according to the election of grace, wholly irrespective of good works, is clearly demonstrated ; for surely infants are not admitted into the Church to mock them, or to delude their parents, but they are admitted for the express purpose of teaching unto all that the Church of God consisteth of infants made perfect, as well as of men made perfect, "of small as well as of great." Now, if it be once admitted, and I have never heard any one hardy enough to deny it, that infants do constitute a part of the redeemed and glorified Church, the question for silencing the glory of the creature is—And for what good works foreseen in them could they have been elected ? or for what good done in them were they brought unto eternal life ? It is most manifest, therefore, that the salvation of an infant can proceed only from the fountain of the Father's electing will, Christ's all-sufficient righteousness, and the Spirit's all-prevailing efficacy ; the knowledge of the creature and the power of the creature being completely latent and wholly inactive. And as there is not one way revealed for the salvation of infants, and another way for conscious men, it is clear and manifest that the principle which alone will apply to one must be the principle which applies to all, and that salvation proceedeth at the only will of the Father, through the only medium of the Son, and by the only operation of the Holy Ghost, subordinating unto the glory of the Godhead all the

powers of the creature, and compelling, by the greater power of the Godhead, all the powers and faculties of the rebellious creature; and as in the infant the evil inclination and obstinate perversity of all the powers of man are not yet revealed, so neither is the work of the Divine persons revealed, but the principle of the work—the free grace of God unto the fallen creature—is the same in both.

Now you will excuse it, brethren, upon the consideration of all the comfort I have derived myself, and which every be-reaved parent should derive from the sacrament of baptism,—from that substantial and essential part of the mystery, that it is the right, and property, and inheritance of infant children of believers, as well as of believing men,—if I go aside here for a moment to justify, and to admire, and to bless that standing ordinance, that initiatory rite, and all-inclusive mystery of the Church of Christ. On the one hand, against the adult-baptists, I maintain that the very foundations of grace are subverted by that grievous error into which they have fallen, of denying baptism to infants; which, if it were adopted by the Church, instead of having been always rejected as the badge of a sect, and the fruit of schism in the Church, it would come to pass that the visible Church on earth would testify a lie with respect to the Church in heaven, inasmuch as it would then consist only of full-grown men, to the exclusion of children, of infants; and such a Church established on earth would produce one or other of these two effects—either the belief that infants are not admitted into the Church of heaven at all, or, if they are admitted, it is wholly irrespective of the work of Christ; for, if they be admitted on consideration of the work of Christ applied unto them by the Holy Ghost,—if they have the reality, why should they not also have had the sign? O brethren, the incarnation of the Son of God, which, being understood aright, is the key of all mysteries, openeth to my mind likewise the mystery of infant baptism; for the Holy Ghost did not wait until His baptism, but took possession of Him the moment of His conception. The Son of God united Himself to the woman's seed in the womb of the Virgin, and the Holy Ghost possessed the holy thing which was conceived of her and born of her, and the same

Holy Ghost abode in Him during the season of unconscious infancy, and was in Him, though there was no means of revealing Himself as yet in His power and holiness unto the knowledge of men. And so I say it is with every elect child of God, that they have the Holy Ghost from the first moment of their being—have Him in virtue of the Father's electing and of Christ's redeeming love ; and that the Church may be a fit manifestation of this, she ought to have, and cannot do without, her ordinance of infant baptism, whereby she may declare that the elect of God are separated by the Holy Ghost from their mother's womb, and that the work of the Spirit is as much a part of the eternal counsel as is the sacrifice of the Lamb which was slain before the foundation of the world. This is that which makes infant baptism proper, yea, even possible ; but we are not therefore to conclude that, because the elect are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and blessed in the Spirit with spiritual blessings in heavenly places, we are not particularly to reverence the ordinance of baptism as signifying and sealing the same unto us in the sight of the Church, and opening unto our own experience a new measure of the Spirit's influence, which also is shewn in the mystery of the incarnation, by the Spirit descending upon our Lord in the form of a dove, when He came up out of the waters of baptism. Neither do I argue from these premises that the time of the manifestation of the Spirit is at the birth or at the baptism of God's elect, or at any other particular time,—nay, the object of our argument is to place the gift of the Spirit, out of all time and all circumstances, in the hand of the Father and the Son, and to place the manifestation of the Spirit at any time or in any circumstances which may seem to them most to their own glory ; so that it is no objection to say that the Spirit of God was not manifested till such a time, and therefore to conclude that He was not present before : for as the seed of a royal people of kings and priests, yet to be manifested, has been present in the seed of Abraham during all their captivities and dispersions, and, to revert to my former instance, as the seed of the glorious Lord of all was present in the Creature born of the Virgin during all the period and in all the passages of His humilia-

tion ; so I say that the seed of a glorified saint is present in every saint who cometh to glory through all the passages, however sinful and however humiliating, of his present pilgrimage.

But, to return from this digression, I observe, thirdly, that by the death of infants, when connected with infant baptism, which revealeth that infants are a part of the glorified Church, is shewn forth the sovereignty of God to destroy and to redeem the creature. His sovereign right to destroy the best of His handiworks is shewn forth in the death of an infant ; for there is not in the fallen world such a goodly and delightsome object to the eye of angels or of men as an infant ere yet it hath attained to the knowledge of good and evil—its beauty, its perfectness of form, its continual appeal for help, its undoubting confidence in all, the simplicity, the guilelessness of its affections, the early notice and love of its parents, with a thousand other things which are too tender in my memory to be now exposed in a public place. These, together with the hopes of the future Church and world which are wrapt around the cradle of infants, (for without infants there were neither men nor women to carry on the world's being, or manifest the Church's coming glory,) do make an infant the goodliest and the tenderest object which the creation of God contains ; else the great God our Saviour would never have been an infant before He became a man. They liken infants unto angels because of their purity ; they liken them unto cherubs because of their beauty ; but an infant is a greater mystery of God's creation than either an angel or a cherub, in whom, however excellent and noble in their estate, there is only one individual creature of God, whereas in an infant there may be, there generally is contained, the seed of thousands yet to be. And oh, what a proof it is of the sovereignty of God to destroy—that such a goodly creature of beauty and hope, of present affections and future prospects, should be cut off and return unto the dust, before it hath been able to name the name of God, or lisp the name of its mother ! I would not lose this demonstration of God's sovereignty to destroy, for all the pangs which it costs a parent's heart to see the image of God defaced in his child by the

corruption of the grave ; because out of this demonstration of God's sovereignty to kill cometh the demonstration of His sovereignty to make alive again. For, if I did not recognise in the death of infants the sovereign act of God,—that is, if it was done against Him, and, as it were, in spite of Him, by the powers of death and of corruption,—then I might fear that the powers of death and corruption, having got the victory, might keep the foul prison, and banquet for ever ; but, seeing in it an act of God to destroy the creature, that He might raise it again in a diversity of form,—some to life eternal, most glorious, some to death eternal, most inglorious, so that of the same lump one part being raised in honour, and another in dishonour, the creature might know that it was not God,—I have such a faith of God's sovereignty in all things as reduceth me to my creature conditions, and enableth me to walk before God as my Creator in the face of this fallen world, which on all hands conspireth together to hide my Creator, and to persuade me that I owe Him no homage at all. Brethren, if there was a single creature or particle of a creature upon which God had not first put forth His power to destroy it, before putting forth His power to constitute it in eternal blessedness, then I say that creature, that particle of a creature, would regard itself, and be by others regarded, as the very God ; and if there was any term or period of human life exempted from the putting forth this power to destroy, that term or period of life would be looked to with a reverence and a fondness which is proper to the eternal state of the raised body and reunited soul.

The fourth great lesson which is taught us by this ordinance of God, and which groweth out of all the preceding, is the chief end of man, which is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever. This, I say, is taught us more unequivocally by the death of infants, and kept more constantly before our eyes, than could in any other way be done. For, if this were a state of probation, as your Pelagians say,—that is, a state like unto Adam's, where our virtue were put to proof under a system of rewards and punishments,—why should one half of the species be carried off before they could comprehend the nature of virtue and vice, or the nature of the reward and

punishment set before each? That certainly is a most wretched view of the end of human life which cannot by any means apply to one half of those who have lived. So that the death of infants puts the bar of falsehood across this view of the chief end of man. Another very prevalent view among Arminians is, that we are placed here not under probation but under discipline, and in preparation for another state. But this, though it hath a grain of truth in it, can as little be admitted as the former ; because if this were the end of man's existence in the present world, why should one half of all that are born into it die before their faculties were capable of being opened by culture or trained by any kind of discipline? If to prepare for another estate be the object of the present life, why do all these depart before they can have made any preparation? It is quite manifest, therefore, that some other view of our present state must be sought for than these two, which are contradicted by the great ordinance of Providence concerning which we discourse. And what that is or can be I know not, but that which is stated in the first question of our Catechism, that man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever. That is to say, for the glory of God is the creature produced in its present fallen estate of sin and death, that the power and goodness of God may be displayed in it, by raising it out thereof into a state of holiness and life eternal. The first estate of death is permitted to come upon His handiwork, that it may be brought by the manifestation of His Son and the communication of His Spirit unto the second estate of eternal blessedness. It was needful for His glory that it should be so ; and as the blessedness of the creature standeth only in the glory of God, it was necessary for the blessedness of the creature also by all that exists in this world. I see what misery ariseth to creatures which discern not continually their Creator as the upholder of their being ; and I am content, at whatever expense it may be, to believe that there is a state beyond, in which the creature, by enjoying the Creator, shall be blessed for ever. I see this condition really though imperfectly present in the Church, wherein creatures that once were dark are enlightened with the countenance of God, and those who once were, like the rest, gods

unto themselves, have been brought to the knowledge of a God above and besides themselves, through means of the faith of Jesus Christ and the gift of the Holy Ghost. And seeing the infants of believing parents, or any infant for whom worthy sponsors can be found, may be admitted into this church-estate of the creature, I am satisfied, and say within myself, that the whole present dispensation is for the purpose of manifesting the innate worthlessness of the creature, and the infinite goodness and worthiness of the Creator in drawing forth from the fallen and dead creatures a body of life, whereof His Son is the supporting head, and the Holy Ghost is the living spirit. Into the outward manifestation of which election, that is the Church, we are permitted to introduce our children from the very womb. This bringeth all living creatures into the same universal condemnation, and sheweth that the election reacheth unto the infant as well as to the ancient. And in this we rest satisfied and contented, that, as our infants are liable to the same death from being out of Christ, they have likewise in Him the same grace extended to them as to others, all dependent upon the free and sovereign grace of the God and Father of all. And thus have I shewn the mystery of God's providence, which is shut up in the death of infants.

On these accounts, dear brethren, we ought not to stand amazed, nor to be astounded by the hand of God put forth in the death of infants, but we ought to rally our thoughts, as I have this morning sought to do, and fall back upon the bulwarks of our faith, and seek for our consolation in the apprehension of the glory of God. I do not speak at present of the good effects which flow unto ourselves, reserving that for the subject of our evening discourse. I speak in this of higher matters than those which concern self, or the visible Church, or the world,—even of those matters which concern the glory of God in the manifestation of His own infinite fullness in Christ, and in the communication of a portion thereof unto the creatures by the Holy Ghost; and as a creature of my God, I am content to be broken and bruised, and parted asunder between body and soul, so that I know it is my God who doeth it, and that He is doing it for His own glory. And

what I say of myself, I say also of the infants whom God in the covenant regardeth as a part of myself. Let them suffer, let them die, and let their beauty consume away in the grave,—let a father's schemes be confounded in falsehood, and a mother's hopes swallowed up in darkness,—let all this be if it is for His glory that it should be. And if any of our children should refuse to submit in resignation to God's afflicting hand, then it were our part to teach them to do it, with all a parent's authority, and all a parent's earnestness. Oh! it is a painful thing to a parent's heart to see his infant suffer, to see his helpless infant die; but it is a victory worthy the contendings and wrestlings of faith to submit to God, and to glorify God in the midst of it all. This, this, dear brethren, is what I have this morning endeavoured to help you to, in the way in which I have been helped to it myself. I have sought to put the death of infants in its proper place in the great scheme of God, and I shall endeavour in the evening to point out to you its great uses in the state of the Church in time. Meanwhile, as I have sought to instruct you, notwithstanding the painfulness of the subject, and the freshness of the wound which the Lord hath inflicted on my house, I do now ask you in return the fellowship of your prayers, that my house may be enabled to give you the example of those same lessons which I have taught you; and may God grant us all grace to glorify Him in our afflictions, that our own souls may experience the peaceable fruits thereof, for, as it is written, "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

## XXV.

### ON THE DEATH OF CHILDREN.

2 SAM. XII. 15-24.

**I**N continuation of the subject which we opened in the morning, we do now descend from the higher and purer region of God's glory and eternal purpose, into the lower and more homefelt region of Christian experience, in order to shew how the death of infants is as profitable, yea, and I may say indispensable, to our own good, as it is necessary to the complete manifestation of the purpose of God and the work of Christ. And that I may bring so large and various a subject within the bounds of one discourse, I shall observe the following order:—Treating, first, of the good fruits of the death of infants as it affecteth the Church in general; secondly, as it affecteth the parents or sponsors of the baptized child; and, thirdly, as it affecteth the child itself.

And, first, with respect to the Church, you will understand that all baptized children are wards of the Church; that is to say, from the time that the name of God hath been named upon them, and the Christian name supplanted the name of nature, children are to be regarded as holiness unto the Lord, and so to be dealt with by all who reverence the ordinance of Christ; so that in the Church there is but one family and household, the household of faith, and one God and Father over all, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of which family the Church is the visible mother, to rear them up for the city of their habitation, which is the Jerusalem above; or, rather, to speak more correctly, the Church on earth is the womb in which they are conceived, and the pains of death the travail of their mother, by which they are born

into the Jerusalem above, which is indeed the mother of us all. So that, so long as the children of God are upon the earth, they be like infants in the womb, which have not enjoyed their liberty, nor breathed the proper element of their life, nor looked upon the face of their parent, which is seen in Jesus Christ. And as there be in the womb of every mother the germs of many children beside those which see the light, so in the Church on earth there be the outward forms of many children of God which are never born into the Jerusalem above,—it being the appointment of the Lord that it should be so, that the tares should grow among the wheat until the harvest. Now, of this the family of the Church, many are taken away in infancy, ere ever the Church hath been able to minister unto them any instruction, or witness any of the fruits of the Holy Ghost; and the question is—What is the good of this dispensation unto the Church? And I answer, first, it is good for her humiliation, and secondly, for her instruction.

(1.) For her humiliation, in order to shew her that, with all her beautiful ordinances and excellent ministries, she is not the glorious spouse of Christ, but only, as it were, the elements out of which He is creating a spouse for Himself. This continual snatching away of her children before they have been of any service in the household, should humble her out of all those wicked imaginations with which Satan hath deluded the apostasy, to think that she hath the dignity of the reigning spouse of Christ, and shew her that her condition is that of a widow, and not of a queen, and that her proper vocation upon the earth is to enter into the fellowship of the sufferings of her Lord, who bare our infirmities and carried our diseases; that her calling is to suffer, and not to enjoy,—to labour in sowing the seed, and not to rejoice in reaping the harvest. For what mother would rejoice or enjoy herself, when ever and anon another infant was snatched from her arms? Such a mother would say, “I am content to be the Lord’s handmaid, and to suffer for His sake; but I am not yet surely the spouse of Him who is the resurrection and the life;” and such a mother would devote herself to acts of patient endurance and constant labour, waiting for her reward in the world

to come. And even so it ought to be with the Church, whose fruitful and numerous family is without intermission spoiled of its hopes, ere yet they have been of any *service in the house*, or comfort to their mother. To have forgotten this lesson of humility, and to have exalted herself unto the character of the queen, is the crowning sin of Babylon, who saith, "I am no widow; I sit as a queen, and shall see no sorrow." Oh, but surely it was intended of Christ to humble the Church with His own humiliation, and make her partaker of His own sufferings, that He should permit her, yea, oblige her, to pray for the life of her children, and still so order it as that they should not be spared to her. Doth it not declare that Rachel is her true emblem, who wept for her children, and would not be comforted, because they were not?

(2.) For the Church's instruction, in order to teach her, as hath been said, that this life, with all its powers and faculties of well-doing, even when employed to the greatest advantage, is but the life of her children before their birth—a season of restless confinement unto themselves, of languor and suffering unto her. Oh, what a lesson it is to learn that this world is the prison of the Church of Christ, and that the world to come is its liberty and enjoyment! And in no way could this lesson be taught but by God's taking away of many of those who are to enjoy Him through eternity, before ever they could know Him in time. For if it had been otherwise ordered, that every saint should have served in the Church his apprenticeship for the kingdom, then, such is the overweening conceit of sight, this visible portion of activity, however small, would have eclipsed the invisible, however large. To prevent which error in His Church, and to carry her desire forward to the kingdom, the Lord reaps many of His choicest plants before ever they have bloomed or born fruit upon the earth; yea, brethren, and the Lord setteth forth these as the models of all the rest, saying to His apostles, when they sought precedency in His kingdom, "He that would be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, let him be as this little child." Our state is truly the militant state of the Church, and we will always be persuading ourselves that it is the triumphant state; but God will not suffer us to be

deceived, and therefore it is that the marauding enemy is permitted, not only to fight against our embattled host upon the tented field, but steal in upon the nurseries of the state, and carry off the hopes of the nation. Oh, I remember well when God gave me a son, the most hopeful of his kind, that I devoted him by a solemn covenant unto the Lord from the hour of his birth, and fondly dreamed and fondly schemed how he might be rendered most serviceable to the Church; and when the Lord cut short his life when it had little more than filled the round of one year, I was stunned and staggered for a while, until it pleased Him to reveal for my comfort what I have now taught for your edification, that the present life, compared with the life of the resurrection, is but like the life of the eaglet in the shell compared with the life of the mighty eagle who ascends into the height of the heavens, and looks into the face of the sun.

Besides this, I perceive another most important point of instruction arising to the Church from these dispensations of God, —that they act as a continual admonition of the true standing of the Church as the parents of baptized children, which is so little thought of, that when I state it out I fear that many of you will be startled. The relation of a parent to his baptized child is not that of nature, but of covenant, which he hath entered into with the Church. The natural tie is virtually dissolved in the very act of presenting the child for baptism, which is a voluntary act of the parent, putting his child to death in the faith of the resurrection; for baptism hath in it of the nature both of a death and a burial and a rising again; and what it is that is slain and buried I know not, unless it be that which is born of the flesh, and inherited from our parents, which, if it be put to death and be buried in baptism, lives no longer in the eye of God, and ought to live no longer in the eye of the parent or the Church. In consideration of which sinful thing, put to death and buried by the Abrahamic act of faith, every child which was a child of election from the beginning cometh a child of promise, upon whom God's name is named, in sign of His right and propriety in that holy child. But whom now have we as a guardian for these children of the Lord? That guardian is Jesus Christ, the Shepherd and Bishop of our

souls. But in His absence, to whom shall His flock be intrusted? Certainly to the pastors and elders, as we term it, or to the bishops and priests of our sister Church. To these, duly ordained and set apart, pertaineth the guardianship of the baptized children; and I hold, my brethren of the eldership, that we shall be answerable in the day of judgment for all that we admit into the Church by the sacrament of baptism; which responsibility to discharge, but by no means to remove—for removed it cannot be—we do find out a spon- sible person, preferring to all others the parents themselves, into whose hands, by solemn covenant, we commit the charge of that child, for whom we are responsible to the great Head of the Church, and so a covenant is established between the parent and the child, instead of that natural relation which, of his own accord, the parent surrendered up. Now, brethren, I ask you, how little these responsibilities of the covenant are remembered, either by the Church or by the engaging parent? I do not say *performed*, but *remembered*; for the very memory of it is departed, which forgetfulness to prevent, and ever to keep alive the Church's wakefulness over her children, God doth cut off so many of them in infancy, that she may oft ask herself the question, How have I fulfilled my duties towards this child, which is departed from my sight? and when she faltereth to answer, accusing herself by her silence, that she may be pricked in her to feel and say, Let me, then, be more careful of those who still are left. When Simon Peter, thrice questioned by Christ if he loved Him more than these, thrice replied, "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee," the Lord did thrice require of him to feed His sheep and lambs; which words of the Lord were as certainly addressed to me and to the elders of this Church, in respect to the baptized children of this Church, as they were addressed to Peter, in respect to those whom he should baptize. But this, dear brethren, all of us seem to have forgotten, and therefore the Lord is wroth with His Church, because she hath ceased from the watchful care of His children. And oh, my brethren, if we would again recover the favour of the Lord, and have His ear opened to our prayers, we must look into our registry of baptism for other ends than to ascertain the days of natural

birth and authenticate our parentage,—even for the ends of numbering our families, and ascertaining how parents have discharged themselves of their sponsorship. And to bring home this lesson to you, and unto me, and unto all, is one reason why the Lord waiteth for no time nor period of life, but at all times, and oftenest in infancy, takes our children from before our eyes.

And now I come, in the second place, to speak of the blessed fruits of this dispensation unto parents, whom I must ever consider, as hath been said above, not in the light of merely natural parents, but of spiritual guardians, in whom the affections of nature are all sanctified, or rather regenerated, by the quickening of the Holy Ghost. And here my experience of human frailty, as well as my understanding of Christian doctrine, enable me to declare, that there is no dispensation of God so calculated to penetrate the flinty heart of man and break it into pieces as this ordinance of Providence concerning which we discourse. The tender object of our love is permitted to strike a thousand roots into our flinty hearts by its artlessness and affection, and, above all, by its natural wants; and then in an instant the Lord roughly and resolutely tears it away, and in the act rives asunder the flinty heart in which it was rooted,—a rough, a stern, but needful remedy, as every one will confess who hath proved his heart to be harder than the nether millstone. I say needful, because I know not how otherwise in many instances it can be accomplished. It is not true in general that as our children advance in years they become more wrapt around the hearts of their parents. They do, indeed, become more implicated with our worldly hopes and interests and ambitions; but they grow out of us into a separate personality, to become the heads and the members of the generation that is to follow. The season when affection hath the field wholly is exactly the season whereof I now discourse; and sure I am, that however taken by us, these dispensations are intended by God to break our hearts and make them contrite before Him. Now, as there is no hope of a man while he is whole at heart, and much hope of him when he is broken in heart and bowed down in spirit, I do account these dispensations to be both very

wisely adapted to man's fallen condition, and very wholesome medicines to remove the obstructions which hinder and clog the spiritual life. I do find in the progress of the earth from the rocky barrenness of nature to the productive fertility of the harvest field, an emblem which may well illustrate this part of my subject. In the flinty surface of the rock, which no plough can scratch nor harrow penetrate, the pendent blue-bell will strike its slender fibrous roots, and the odoriferous wallflower will fix its stronger stem, and so afford an ingress to the soft and gentle dews of heaven, which, when the nipping blast of winter comes to destroy all things, freezes up, as if it would nourish vegetation no longer; but, lo! in the very act of hardening into ice, it bursts the flinty rock, and prepares a soil for bearing more plentiful fruits when summer shall arrive again with its nourishing heat. And thus it is that the flinty surface of the rock is at length changed into a fertile field, by the icy hand of winter, which threateneth the life of all things. Even so, in the providence of God, the hardest hearts, which nothing else could render fruitful unto God, are first, by the insinuations of beautiful and sweetly blooming children, impenetrated in a thousand parts, and by the nipping hand of death broken up and made contrite, and otherwise fitted for the dwelling-place of God, who hath said, "Though I dwell in the high and holy place, yet with him also who is of a humble and contrite spirit."

The next great good of this dispensation unto Christian parents is to teach them the experience of somewhat of the fellow-feeling of that act of love and self-sacrifice which moved the Father to give up His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life. This act of resignation hath its emblem and resemblance upon earth in nothing but this, that a father should resign his infant against all his tender affections, because it is profitable unto the glory of God; for the infant child is an object of pure affection; the adult child, on the other hand, is an object of various feelings, made up of ambition, interest, and pride, as well as of affection. There is, I believe, no sacrifice which doth so well shadow forth the sacrifice which God made of His own well-beloved Son, with whom

were His delights, as that which a parent maketh in surrendering unto God his infant child, who hath been to him the object of innocent joy and delight. If indeed we were enabled in baptism to make the offering as we ought to make it, and to realise the Abrahamic act of faith, then would baptism be the true symbol of the Father giving up His Son ; but, alas ! sight is so strong, and faith so weak, that we seldom realise this mystery in the dedication of our children, and therefore, loth to chastise us for our insufficient faith in the act of baptism, as well as to exercise us with the nobler feeling of redemption, God is pleased to call away the joy of our hearts, and to remove the sight of our eyes with a stroke. And blessed is the father, and blessed is the mother, who, in loving a beloved child, are able to realise any portion of this Divine affection. Oh for the disinterestedness, oh for the love of God's glory, which might move us to give up father and mother, and brother and sister, and wife and child, and our own life also, for His sake ! This is the sowing in tears that we may afterwards reap in joy.

I observe, thirdly, that nothing so effectually quickens the love of the Christian towards all the living as the loss of his dearly beloved children. First, unto the living God it draws his affections more entirely when he hath thus seen the nearest and the dearest of visible objects removed from his sight. Ah, they rudely say that certain creatures love you more the more you chastise them ; and among these they include a wife, little knowing the mystery which is expressed therein, that the true wife of Christ, His elect Church, is only the more tender in her affections and constant in her faith according as she is rebuked and chastised of her Lord and Master ; because she well doth know that her Lord and Master never chastiseth her but for her profit, that she might be partaker of His holiness. The Husband first endured the chastisement, and by sufferings was made perfect. He desireth for His wife the same perfection, and conducteth her towards it by the same rugged and thorny path. And as He laid aside every weight, so doth she desire to lay aside every weight, and to run the race that is set before her by the Author and the Finisher of her faith. And as Christ by such cheerful and willing humility entered

into the honour and glory of His kingdom, and became the delight of His Father and the manifestation of His glory for ever; so do we, His poor members, by the like acts of patient obedience, grow into the love and favour of God, receive more abundantly of His comforting Spirit, and being filled with the Spirit, we grow into the communion and fellowship of the saints, and bear a tender heart to all of the household of faith. And I make no doubt that many fathers and many mothers are made childless that they may become fathers and mothers in Israel; and that many ministers of the Church have, like the prophet Ezekiel, the sight of their eyes—that is, the wife of their bosom—removed with a stroke, that they may, like St Paul, fight the good fight of faith and of testimony free and disentangled from the world's cares. And as I have read that in war soldiers, by the loss of their wives and their children, have been raised to a pitch of valour which nothing could withstand; and as upon the death of Gustavus the Swede, when his steed without his royal rider passed furiously before the Swedish lines, which were sorely pressed, the sight so smote upon the heart of these Christian soldiers, that they bore down the lines of the enemy as the wind doth bear the thistledown before it; so, even so, I do believe that God exalteth the faith, and kindleth the temper of those by whom He would work mighty exploits, by bereaving them of their heart's delight, and depriving them of their darling enjoyments, that, being delivered from personal cares and personal loves, they may be ready to serve Him in the more enlarged offices and duties of His Church. And thus it was that our blessed Lord, who had lived in subjection to His parents for thirty years, did, on commencing His ministry, at the marriage of Cana, deny Himself to a mother's authority; and shortly after, when they told Him that His mother and His brethren stood without, He stretched forth His hands unto His disciples, and said, "Behold my mother and my brethren; for he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my mother, and my brother, and my sister." Oh, believe me, dear brethren, that our hearts are too much at home, and too little with the Church; that we are absorbed with the affections of nature which live at home, and so hindered of the consolations

of the Spirit, which are found in the Church; and God, pitying the poverty of His people, and not willing that they should abide in such misery, doth cut the cords of nature, which bind us to the earth and the world, in order that we may ascend into and expatiate over the spiritual regions of the redeemed Church. Let every parent who hath been bereaved of his infants say if the fountains of love and pity and tenderness have not been opened more plentifully towards everything that liveth. It is not like the rock of Meribah, which must first be stricken by the rod of God before the waters of refreshment will flow out to the thirsty and perishing people.

O God, if Thou hast seen it good to unite this Church in true brotherly love, by afflicting us in our several habitations, Thy will be done, for we are a stiffnecked and gainsaying people; and if it should please Thee to deal in like manner by the Church in general, as indeed Thou seemest to be doing in cutting off her most excellent and fruitful ministers, Thy will be done, for we seem to have passed the stage at which words avail, into that in which it is necessary to plead with judgments.

Finally, dear brethren, I observe that these signal strokes of God's providence are wonderfully blessed by the Spirit to awaken in us deep searchings of heart and lowly humiliations of spirit, and careful reviews of our past life and examinations of our present state, in order to discover what the Lord purposeth by the visitation of an infant's death; for it is manifest that besides those ends of God's own glory, which I opened in the morning, there can be no other but the ends of the Church's and of the parent's well-being from the death of an infant child, seeing it is not smitten for its own actual sin, but is made a little sacrifice for the good of others; and therefore it is not to be doubted that such a stroke will be attended with more heart-searchings than any other; and of all the questions which the heart asketh at itself in such calamities, perhaps the most important of all is this, "Am I resigned unto the will of God? Do I murmur? do I repine? or am I in the midst of my sorrow meek and gentle, and like a weaned child?" I tell you, brethren, that while the boat sails with the stream we know little of her seaworthiness, but

when the winds blow and the streams set adverse, we then discover either the sufficiency or the insufficiency ; even so, while all is prosperous in our affairs and joyful in our hearts, we know little of our true estate in the sight of God, which will seem to us safe and comfortable enough, until the Lord, pitying our self-deception, and not willing that we should be shipwrecked outright, sends athwart our course a blast of wrath and indignation to awaken us from our loved security into the sense of our true condition. I can for myself declare that the obstinacy and perversity of my own will was never brought home to my conviction but by the sterner chastisements of God. Then it is we discover our own obstinate perverseness and wicked courses when the angel of the Lord revealeth himself in our path as he did to Baalam with a drawn sword. This brings us to our senses. This recalls us to our right mind, if anything will do it ; and if not, then it hardeneth us, and driveth us, as it did Baalam, unto desperate destruction.

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But time does not permit me to follow out the many thoughts which are awakened in our minds towards you—thoughts of love to you and to your children, thoughts of zeal for the promotion of the Church's well-being ; but one thing I will say before I close, that for the perfection of my spiritual life all I desire and pray for is to become as the little infant whose death I am this day seeking to improve unto the glory of God, and unto the good of His Church. It was an excellent saying of the famous Luther, that his little boy reproved him continually of his want of faith, "for this child," said he, "never doubted my word in his life, but this the word of my Father I do never cease from doubting and disbelieving ;" but a still more excellent saying of wiser lips than Luther's was, that ye must become as little children if ye would enter into the kingdom of heaven. Ah, it afflicts the heart of a wise and worthy man when he looks upon a child and compares himself with the child. And believe me, dear brethren, it is not to the wise and prudent, but unto babes that God revealeth Himself : therefore, to close all with one word of counsel, let every parent who hath been

bereaved of his child seek to become towards God what that child of which he hath been bereaved was towards himself; and let every mother so gladly receive the milk of the word of God as the babe received the milk of her breast; and let every father so stretch out his hands and lift up his voice to his Father in heaven as his little child stretched out his arms and lifted up his voice to him. And as the infant is beloved of all the house for its innocency and affectionateness, so let every one of you seek to be beloved in the house of God; and thus, dear brethren, shall we be nourished up as the children of a common mother, which is the Jerusalem which is above, and of a common Father, which is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## XXVI.

### THE DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES.

I TIM. VI. 9, 10.

*But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

WE come now to discourse against the love and pursuit of riches, the mainspring of this age of the world in which we live, in which assuredly this evil passion hath reached a height which it never heretofore obtained in Christendom, and perhaps nowhere obtained, except in Pagan Rome from the time of our Lord's birth until the destruction of Jerusalem,—a period rendered signal by the unbounded licentiousness of men and the terrible judgments of God. Whenever I look upon human society, especially as it exists amongst ourselves, I find the same unhallowed thirst of gold, the same earnest devotion to obtain it by any and every means, the same profusion and waste in expending it, and the same hungering after more. In the government of kingdoms this spirit of profusion hath raged to such excess during the last thirty years, that uncounted debts weigh them like a millstone to the earth, yea, threaten to sink them in the depths of the sea. The nobles of the land, saving a few, cannot reap from their broad domains wherewithal to keep their place in the gay concourse of extravagance and folly which the spirit of the times annually assembleth to hold their revels in this our lordly city. Our noble merchants, whose honest word was heretofore guarantee for untold treasures, who were the guardians of religion and liberty and civil order in their several municipalities, have, by universal confession of

themselves, become speculators, gamblers, usurers, hastening to be rich, and setting their hearts upon a fortune, which heretofore would have contented ten or even a hundred honourable men. Our tradesmen also, little contented with the slow but sure increase of honest industry, and counting little upon the ancient dignity of a well-educated family honestly set out in the world, and the other noble offices of an honest and upright religion, have likewise caught the infection of the times, and set their heart upon a certain style, and even equipage, upon the luxuries of the table, and the vanities of dress, and the imitation of all the follies and extravagances of those above them. Nay, but the same spirit hath seized the lowest classes of the people, who, within the last thirty years, have been tried with such extremes of high and of low wages, and in both cases have manifested the same spirit of the love of gain: in good times, by their extravagance and utter recklessness of the future, by their enslaving to labour their yet immature children, and by all manner of riot and wicked excess; in bad times by their confederacies and combinations, and most violent proceedings against their masters, whom it is their duty to honour and to thank, and against their brethren if they will not submit to partake in their outrageous violence. From the highest to the lowest classes of society, there is a high and feverish pulse, arising from the inflamed passion of gain, which is sore displeasing to the Lord, which He hath rebuked by the chastisement of many months, which He hath sought to cure by denying it its wonted nourishment, and which, if it be not cured by the medicine of God's present dispensation, will weaken the strong constitution of this kingdom, and at length destroy it altogether.\* For if we consult the history of God's judgments, we shall find that they always come upon a people full of wealth, and luxury, and pride, and self-sufficiency. This was the case with Judah and Jerusalem, when Isaiah prophesies against them speedy judgment: "Their land is also full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of

\* This sermon was preached in the autumn of 1826, at the time of a great commercial crisis.

their treasures ; their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots." And the luxury of Israel, before its utter destruction, is described throughout the whole prophecy of Hosea and likewise of Amos ; as it is written, "That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall ; that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music, like David ; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments : but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." Wherefore saith the Lord, "I will smite the winter-house with the summer-house ; and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end." And it is prophesied of the latter times, when the Lord shall come in judgment upon the Gentiles, by the apostle James : "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered ; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth : and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton ; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just ; and he doth not resist you." And in like manner of the same times is it prophesied by Isaiah : "The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh," (chap. xxiv. 7.) And our Lord himself says of the same period : "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be," (Matt. xxiv. 37.) So that to any one who hath wisdom and understanding to discern the signs of the times, the character of the last thirty years, which are the years of omen, and the present character of those parts of the world called Christendom, sheweth manifestly that the day of the Lord draweth

nigh—that day which is to be “upon every one which is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low,” (Isa. ii. 12.)

Such, dearly beloved brethren, are my convictions concerning the prevalence and power of that evil desire which is rebuked in the text, which is stigmatised in the text as the root of all evil, and concerning which I have now set myself, in the strength of the Lord, to discourse at large; and may the Lord preserve me from all fears of mortal man, and from all snares of Satan, and delusions of my own wicked heart, while I endeavour, for the sake of His glory, to warn the Church of Christ against the most imminent peril to which she is exposed, and in which, alas! she is too much involved, and while I warn the world against that which will bring upon it the threatened judgments of God.

The text consists of these three several parts, which we shall take in order,—First, the general proposition, that “the love of money is the root of all evil;” secondly, the effects of this passion upon believers in particular,—“which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows;” thirdly, the effects of it upon men in general,—“they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.” To these we shall attend in order.

We are, then, to consider that general declaration of the apostle, “The love of money is the root of all evil,” whereof the truth will manifestly appear if we consider, first, what “money” is; and, secondly, what the “love” of it implies. Money of itself—that is, the silver and the gold which is usually so denominated—hath few intrinsic qualities for which it should be so desired and sought after, and few uses to which it can be rendered serviceable. In this respect, being compared with iron, or with brass, or even with wood, or with stone, it is a poor servant of man; but being compared with bread and water, and the other kindly fruits of the earth, it sinks into utter worthlessness; and, therefore, there be very few who love it on its own account. And when this does happen, as with avaricious misers, it is only one particular form

of the passion of covetousness, which form it hath assumed gradually by a law common to all our passions, of transferring to the object by which they are gratified the love and pleasures of the gratification itself. For, even with the miser, it is at the beginning as with all other men, that he loves and desires silver and gold, not for their hardness, or their weight, or their colour, or their brilliancy, or any other of their intrinsic qualities, but because, from their scarcity and durability, and other conveniences, they have long been to man the means by which everything in the visible world may be purchased and made our own. It is this quality of money for which the world prizes it so highly, and pursues it so earnestly, and it is this quality of money for which the apostle stigmatiseth it so sorely. It purchaseth everything that is sensual and visible, and it can purchase nothing that is spiritual and invisible. Every bodily desire it can gratify. It can minister luxury to every sense, and it can gratify every evil passion of the mind. Vanity cannot display herself without money. Ambition must have a key of gold to open the doors of that crooked labyrinth through which he winds his way to power and office. As the times go, you cannot attain to any office of honour and trust, but by scattering abroad the arguments of money; and when you have them, you cannot hold them without the qualification of money with which to maintain their state, and satisfy the rapaciousness of your constituents, and of all men with whom you have to do. Base degenerate age! with their feasts and their frolics and their fooleries, they have fairly cast out the honour of virtuous poverty, the nobleness of honest and upright service, the manliness, self-denial, and contentment with little;—it is all gone, it is all departed: thrifty housewives, blunt and honest tradesmen, industrious children, homely comfort, independent citizens, trustworthy office-bearers, incorruptible senators, and magnanimous nobles, and whatever else did heretofore make this land amongst the surrounding nations firm and established as the rocks which girdle her round stand unmoved, and frown fearfully upon the boisterous waves. Money hath corrupted the nerves and sinews of our state, the well-braced framework of which lies all dissolved

abroad in luxury and venality ; but it hath descended, as we said, to us all. In such extravagant customs have we been trained — amongst such indulgences to which our fathers were strangers—such a style of entertaining our friends—such costly dresses for appearing decently amongst them—such frippery and foolery of dress, as if we were children's toys instead of immortal souls—such costly furniture in our houses —such gilded wares for our tables, and ornaments for our walls —such an outwardness, and unsubstantialness, and expensiveness in all the economy of life, that no man can escape from it so as to return back again to the simplicity of our natural wants. The style and fashion of living is so costly, and so far beyond the ordinary powers of industry, that men are forced either to make slaves of themselves all the day and all the week long, or else they are tempted to launch out into speculations and adventures, or start ways of obtaining that supply of money which we now feel, as it were, necessary to our existence.

It is thus that money hath become not only necessary for “providing things honest in the sight of all men,” and the elements of contentment, which are food and raiment, but likewise for nourishing those appetites of the body which should be restrained and denied, and those affections of the natural man which it is the part of a Christian to mortify and put to death. This comes of giving public opinion that influence over us which in these times it holdeth, instead of withstanding the world at every step as an enemy, and fearing most of all its overtures of friendship and alliance ; for the friendship of the world is enmity with God. At this day it hath become as indispensable for a Christian to guard himself against the accommodations of Christians as heretofore it was for Christians to guard themselves against the world. If indeed it has pleased the Lord to endue any of His servants with large substance, I think it is their part to live as becometh their rank in life ; but I steadily object that any Christian should adopt the worldly and ambitious maxims, the notions of living, the desires of accumulation, the ideas of education and settlement to their children, which at present obtain in every rank and class of the community,—otherwise

it will plunge them into the same sea of troubles in which the souls of the multitude are at present engulfed. Ye shall find it difficult enough, my brethren, to resist the tide that is flowing around you, even when possessed of all disposition to resist it; but being under the influence of the same moving powers ye shall but swell the tide, and swim with it to the same gulf of perdition. Oh that I could tell as I can perceive, oh that I could withstand as I can tell, the cunning wiles of Satan to destroy the Church of Christ! But of them all this seems to me the most efficient which he hath constructed in the midst of sweet society, and under the canopy of honourable life, and by the sanction of continual custom. Oh, how I feel myself enthralled by it! how fondly would I shake it off! How gladly would I become as a fisherman in the Galilean lake, or as a peasant of my native land! How fondly I would escape the artifices with which Satan daily succeeds against me, arising out of the intricate forms of this artificial life!—escape from the painful reflection of having neglected some of its forms, and from the self-complacency of having discharged them. Ah, I feel it to be like David going to encounter Goliath encumbered with the armour which Saul gave him, thus to encounter Satan with all the expedient forms and fashions of the world hanging heavy around me. Nay, it is worse; David's armour did only overweigh his strength, it did not open a way to his adversaries' weapons; but this paltry disguise of manhood, this mimicry of humanity which hath gotten the upper hand of this generation, is not only a weakening of the Church's strength, but contains in itself a poison to destroy her, like that garment by which it is said, in the deep mythology of the heathens, Hercules, that personification of manly virtue, was destroyed.

That which is necessary to procure all these gratifications of the natural man, is what the apostle means by money in the text, and what our Lord means by mammon in the passage of his Sermon on the Mount, of which He hath so very bad an opinion, that He calls, or miscalls it, the mammon of unrighteousness, and this too at a time when He was teaching the right and profitable use of it. And it is of this that I have to discourse, and of the love of it, and of the evil use

whereof it is the root. It is not the coined money which passeth current from hand to hand, but that for which it passeth current. It is not the sign, but the thing signified; not the measure of the value, but the value which it measur-eth. And I have to shew that the love of it is the root of all evil. For he that loves money loves that visible kingdom of sin and sense and worldliness and vanity which money will procure; and loving this he loveth all evil, because it is the kingdom and treasury of the prince of evil. Now, as money is the concentrated essence of the visible kingdom, so the love of it is as it were the root of all the evil which it contains. But these great truths which are manifest to the spiritual mind at a single glance, are, alas! far removed from the perception, and still further from the conviction of the natural man, and of those spiritual men in whom the natural man is contending for the pre-eminency; and we therefore judge it good to expatiate upon these subjects, which are of such common and daily application, and therefore we shall leave the consideration of the second part of the subject, the love of money, to another discourse.

I cannot close this discourse so well, dearly-beloved brethren, as by entreating you to withstand Satan's encroachments steadily, and to escape without delay from the enthralment into which he hath brought you. Do not yield like fools to his artifices; you know them, resolve to resist them. Recur to simple tastes and inexpensive habits. Be not driven into evil courses, peril not your souls to keep up the state and equipage of life. What better are you that the world say of you, "He is as we are—he is become as one of us?" Is there credit to a Christian in such a speech? Should it please, should it gratify him? Let your food be plain, and your drink be simple and innocent. Let your dress not be costly. Let your entertainments be cheerful, but frugal. And be liberal in your alms, be generous in your gifts. There shine, there excel, in your acts of mercy and beneficence. And go not to be persuaded out of this course by their shallow reasonings about employing those who manufacture luxuries and minister to luxury. That

there should be so many of such is our misery and weakness as a nation. The sooner they are forced to change occupations the better. Our Continental neighbours have always surpassed us in personal refinement; and what degrees have they taken for religion, or for morality, or for beneficence, or for mercy in the great family of nations? The short answer to all such reasonings is, "My soul cannot stand such indulgences; they make me selfish, they lull me asleep, they devour me in lusts. I must look to my own soul, which I find doth thrive better in the atmosphere of temperance, and self-denial, and charity, and well-doing. And what is the world to me if I lose my own soul?" Therefore, brother, I exhort thee to be done with political economy as thy ultimate end, and look to spiritual economy as thy end; for thou art a member of a spiritual city, even the Church, and the heir of an immortal kingdom, even the kingdom of heaven.

And if ever there was a time which called more strongly than another for such exertions and efforts of principle, it is this very time, when all things which a man calls his own have been shaken to their centre, and thousands stricken from their pampered luxury and tawdry grandeur, to nourish upon nothing their extravagant tastes and craving desires. And you may soon suffer the same trial, and therefore it were a prudent and wise thing to be prepared. And honesty requires of you to have wherewithal to meet such stormy weather, and not to be sailing under all your canvas, and with every mast and jury-mast exposed to the tempest. But even though there should be no need on your own account for much manly resistance to the stream of the wicked fashion and custom of the world, think, oh! think, on your poor brethren, about to face a winter in such a perilous condition, without income or household comfort, without necessary clothing for themselves and their children, their all pawned for food,—a miserable condition; and, to add to their miseries, low wages, perhaps scanty employment. God's providence is very wide and ample; but never, methinks, since Britain was a nation, will it be more called for than this winter. Now, brethren, though there were nothing whatever that I have this day

advanced against the spirit of extravagance which everywhere prevails, nothing in the threatened judgments of God, nothing in these considerations of moral honesty, manly independence, and Christian duty ; behold what an imperative call there is here, in the present misery and in the approaching misery of our people ! I am poor, and care not to be rich ; but, oh ! I could almost wish for once to be rich in order to have the blessedness of turning my riches to such good account as there will this winter be need of. Now, my brethren, let not this word fall powerless, and let it not be forgotten. For the sake of the poor, and for your own sake, and for the sake of the Church of Christ, resist the current of fashion, and revert to the necessary demands and comely accommodations of nature, and you will find what a treasure of disposable means, what an increase of good health, and what an advancement in the spiritual life will be the result of it.

I speak all these things as to wise men, and men instructed in Jesus Christ, of whose most necessary ministry to any and every redemption from Satan's power I have discoursed. Ye know that without Him you may change the burden of Satan's yoke from one shoulder to another, but you cannot remove it. The strong man that hath the house must be cast out of the house. The curse that is upon us must be taken off by the Almighty Father, well satisfied with His Son's sacrifice, and those who believe therein. Flesh is the citadel of human nature, and the world is the region which it commandeth and hath tributary, and Satan sits possessed of the citadel, keeping down the prisoner. And who shall set him free ? He who came to destroy Satan's works, and Satan himself to bruise under His feet, and who, by coming in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh, and possessed Himself of the citadel. He only hath the key of David to unlock the barred gates and set the prisoner free. And the soul, being possessed of her enlargement, can then expatiate over the domain of the world, and make changes and work reforms with some effect, being maintained and upheld and guided by the Holy Spirit of Christ, who set her free ; so that you shall not be redeemed from this thralldom

of money otherwise than by the redemption of Christ. Wherefore I do the more earnestly entreat you, my beloved brethren, to be united with Him by living faith, through the operation of the Holy Ghost; and then you shall be willing to do what He did, who, though rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich.

## XXVII.

### THE LOVE OF MONEY.

I TIM. VI. 9, 10.

*But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

HAVING shewn you in our former discourse what is properly implied in the word money, and from what it derives its power of temptation—from being the representative of all visible things, and the necessary means for gratifying every passion; and having likewise shewn you how, within the last thirty years, the earnest desire and lavish outlay of it hath possessed all classes of the community to an unprecedented degree, we do now proceed, as was proposed, in the second place, to treat of the *love of money*, or the *desire to be rich*, upon which the apostle bestows such unqualified condemnation, and, by the help of God, so to describe its character and manifest its vileness as, by the effectual ministry of His Spirit, to instruct and admonish and deliver those who are held captive by this ignominious and most wicked desire.

Man was originally created in the image of God, and all things upon the earth were put under his feet, “all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field,” &c. (Ps. viii. 7.) And he was made to have dominion over the work of God’s hands, towards which therefore it became him to exercise a rightful superiority, and never to demean himself to have fellowship or to have friendship. His body was their sovereign lord, to whose use and entertainment they were all furnished with their several endowments, and it was even a degradation for the sense of man to use these things, to treat these things that are

created and made, otherwise than as the servants and ministers of his state ; in which consisteth the mystery of the creation of the body of man upon the sixth day, all the rest of created things having been first completed, and being in waiting to receive their sovereign lord. The waters brought forth the moving creature that hath life, and the fowl that fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven ; and the earth brought forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping things, and the beast of the earth after his kind ; but the Lord God formed man, saying, " Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth," (Gen. i. 26.) He formed him, indeed, of the dust of the ground, from which the other creatures proceeded, in order that he might have that kindred with them which might enable him to receive all their service, that he might have a responsive pleasure arising from all their active ministries ; but He formed him to have dominion, to take by right what they by their constitution delighted to offer,—he to receive, they to bring homage and service ; he blessing them by the grace of receiving, they fully blessed by the act of bringing. So it was with the body of man. It was made to have dominion, and to enjoy sovereignty over all things, to bless all things, and to be blessed by them. It was beneath its dignity to share alliance with any, to treat them as equals—still more, to set its love upon them ; still more, to become their slave. Oh, how the fall hath bowed man's body from his dignity ! What a curse that was, " In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread !" What a revolution that the lifeless earth should have power to bow down the heavenward body of man to hard and earnest labour ! And what an insurrection, that the creatures should rise upon their lord and master ! that those creatures who received from him their various gifts, as they received from him their various callings, should disown his authority, live in wrath against him, and even take his life ! But this, though a sore and lamentable humiliation, is nothing when compared with that which fell upon his soul ; for the soul, or spirit of life, that the Lord breathed into the

man that He had formed, was a spiritual creature, possessed of a spiritual life, made to love and to desire spiritual communion and fellowship, to live in holiness and righteousness before the Lord, and evermore to worship Him in spirit and in truth. It had no companion in all things created, but was alone in the paradise of Eden. It found not an object of affection until another spirit had been created in the image of God, between whom there was a love such as we are commanded, but ineffectually endeavour, to attain. They loved one another as themselves, but God they loved, even as we are commanded to love Him, "with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their strength, and with all their mind." Such was the terrestrial throne on which man was seated at his creation—the viceroy of God here below, and looking up to God with all his affections filled by the Spirit of God, with all righteousness, and by the word of God established in all wisdom, in harmony and unison with the will of the Father, blessing all things with the government of God himself, fully blessed by the light of God's approving, and by the peace and happiness which he beheld around him. And in this throne, dearly beloved brethren, let me comfort you by declaring that we shall again be reinstated, "when He who is our life shall appear, and we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He *is*,"—not as He *was*, "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," "a root out of a dry ground, without form or comeliness;" but as He *is*, "the Lord from heaven," "the King of glory coming in power and great glory, to be glorified in all His saints." Then shall we receive the adoption, even the redemption of the body. Then also shall the creatures be delivered from their groaning bondage, at the manifestation of the sons of God. Then shall we know even as we are known. Then shall we see face to face. Then shall we be one in Christ Jesus, as He is one with the Father; and we shall serve our God, and love our God, and joy in our God for ever and for ever. How, alas! dearly beloved brethren, when I thus look at the condition in which we were created at first, and to the condition to which believers are to be brought at length, it makes my heart sick to look upon men as they really are found in their present fallen estate! Instead of that love of

God which was the parent of good and peace within the soul—instead of that love of one another which was the parent of all grace and peace and blessedness in the world—instead of that divine self-government and righteous exercise of power which was the bond and blessing of all the inferior creatures—instead of that peaceful and joyful paradise, full of happy life, which was but a faint emblem of the rich fruitfulness and harmonious peace and joy which existed within the soul, what find I when I look abroad upon the sinful and fallen world? Oh, what disorder! oh, what derangement! oh, what degradation! oh, what suffering! oh, what misery! And when I look within myself, and examine this natural man, what a chaos—what a mixture of earth and hell, of this vile, material, lustful earth, of that proud, arrogant, and malicious hell! what ignorance of God! what blindness! I search for Him in vain in all the creatures, and in myself I search for Him in vain. I know that I am of Him. I know that His light shineth in me, but the darkness comprehendeth it not. The prince of the darkness of this world hath blinded our eyes, lest we should see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Oh, it is a dark chamber, a chamber of darkness, and well spoke the Light of the world, when He said, “I am come to open the eyes of the blind, and the prison doors to them that are bound.” Even so come, Lord Jesus, for the redemption of Thy purchased inheritance. Deliver us, O Lord, for we are in great straits. Set us free, for we are in trouble, and redeem us for Thy mercies’ sake.

But of the degradations to which Satan hath reduced his darkened prisoner, this is the foulest and the most debased, to bind him down to a life of drudgery, for the end of gathering riches out of the bowels of the earth, where they are better hid, in order that with these he may first destroy his own soul, and afterwards destroy the souls of many people. Oh, what a pass of wretchedness, to labour a life long in accumulating that store with which Satan commonly succeeds in destroying our children! This, indeed, if the soul’s eyes were opened to discern the true character of things, would be as if a father and a mother, in the midst of a burning city, where sparks and fiery splinters were borne about on every side, should

carry their children beside the magazine of powder, the stores of inflammable spirits, or into the midst of the woodyards, instead of hastening away with them into the open country, or taking refuge upon the quenching and cooling waters. I know that money hath its uses, and that, like every other gift of God, it hath its responsibility, as the apostle well declareth in this very chapter—"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate." I know also that our Lord hath given a parable of the unjust steward, for the express purpose of teaching us how we should use the mammon of unrighteousness, as in His great wisdom He is pleased to term it. And I say unto all such as are endowed of God with this talent, that with the mammon of unrighteousness they make to themselves friends, who shall be able to receive them into everlasting habitations; for he that is unfaithful in the least, will be unfaithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much. "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" (Luke xvi. 9-12.) Nay, brethren, I would not rail against any of God's creatures, which were all created good, and are to be received with thankfulness, and used to His praise and glory, which are all in a state of being redeemed by Christ, and have the first-fruits of that redemption in the hands of every true believer who hath the first-fruits of the redeeming Spirit. But oh, what a difference there is between using them as servants, and setting our affections upon them as equals, or serving them as lords! This is to forget the wise purposes of the creature by their creation—it is to shift them out of their place in the material world, and to give them a place in the spiritual world—it is to exalt them into the sovereigns of the spiritual world, and to give that honour and glory to another which is due unto Him alone, and to love the creature, and to wor-

ship the creature rather than the Creator, who is God over all, blessed for ever, amen.

Any affection, dear brethren, is nobler than this, against which the apostle denounceth such a curse, "that it is the root of all evil." If we descend from the love of God, which is the soul's right estate, her heaven, we come through several spheres of unhappy being, until, at length, we come into the sphere of avarice, or the love of money, which is misery and degradation in its lowest deep; whence our fathers, in that wisdom which is embodied in their language, have agreed to call an avaricious man a miser, which, being interpreted, signifies wretched. These spheres of descending dignity and increasing wretchedness are, first, the sphere of natural love or affection, out of which grows marriage, families, and friendships in their natural state—that is, without any acknowledgment of God; secondly, the sphere of the intellect, out of which ariseth knowledge and power; thirdly, this sphere of sense, out of which ariseth pleasure and possession. These are all miserable enough, in their various kinds, as must be the case whenever God is not present and acknowledged. The first full of disappointment and broken-heartedness; the second full of coldness, envy, pride, and malignity; the third full of disease, satiety, disgust, and low brutality. But still there is in them all a certain relative dignity, a certain capacity of well-being, when compared with this lowest sphere of humanity, where the soul exalts, above all these, and above God himself, the attainment of wealth, and the possession of riches on their own account, or on account of all which they can procure. It is false—they cannot bless a family, but are often a curse to it! It is false—they cannot help the intellect to its worthiest objects! And I do think that for the body also, if you will compare the bodily enjoyments of the rich and the wealthy with those of the middling and even humbler classes, you will find that they are oftener an impediment than a help. I know, indeed, that in these times, when mammon has the ascendancy of all ranks, he hath introduced a base and spurious philosophy, a low and degraded style of sentiment, as if *he* could be of great service in

all these higher spheres of fallen humanity, as well as in this lowest, which is all his own. And, accordingly, we find that for the last thirty years, we have been entertained with the poetry of splendour and of luxury, of vice and profligacy, and with an epicurean philosophy, and, in short, a dissipated literature, full of levity, and of scoffing at everything simple, pure, honest, and of good report. But, notwithstanding the exuberance of wit and jollity and frolicsome humours with which they endeavour to set forth their base service and worship of mammon, they cannot hide their own poverty and barrenness of soul ; for with all their thousands, and for aught I know, tens of thousands of dissipated scribblers, they can bring to light no Bacon, nor Milton, nor Shakespeare, nor Johnson, who, whatever they might be in their own persons, lived in times when it was well known and fully allowed that epicureanism was the lowest school in philosophy, and mammon the lowest object of human pursuit.

Be not deceived, therefore, dearly beloved brethren, for it is by these artifices that Satan first leads you to desire money, or a fortune, as it is wont to be called, as if you would thereby be placed in a fairer way for domestic enjoyment, or for intellectual distinction, or even for bodily enjoyment. Take now this example, in order that you may see the entire falsehood of these deceptions. Compare the wealthy citizens of this or any other wealthy city, with the ordinary inhabitants of our native land ; the former having all abundance, the latter working every year for the year's supply to themselves and to their children. Compare the strength of family attachments, compare the style of discourse, compare the intelligence and information, compare the bodily health of the one class and of the other, and you will see how mammon scourges every faculty and takes the fertility out of every soil, and judge for yourselves whether you are likely to be better and nobler men in the commonwealth by being richer men. Then, for your children, for whose advancement mammon makes many a father to drudge ; go to the university and see whether it be the children brought up in riches, or those brought up in decent comfort, and even in hardihood, who rise to eminence there ; go to the

bar, go to the army, go to the civil establishments of our colonies,—ay, and I will say, go to the shop of mammon himself—that is, the Exchange—and see what a poor, insufficient, heartless, and unsuccessful contest those who have been reared in the lap of luxury wage with the difficulties of the world. It is not for poverty or meanness that I contend, nor is it against wealthy and rich men that I argue; for I rather do pity both extremes of human life, saying with Agur, “Give me neither poverty nor riches; but feed me with food convenient for me.” God is no grudger. He wisheth no one to abide in poverty, save that there they may minister to His glory. He reduceth no one to poverty, but in order that they may become rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. “Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven.” Christ became poor, not that we might be poor, but that we through His poverty might become rich. “The Lord giveth us all things richly to enjoy. He giveth liberally and upbraideth not,” and He hath given us the promise of the life which now is, as well as that which is to come. And the Psalmist testifies, “I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” Against the love of money, I am arguing in particular, and in general against any love but the love of God. And I think I have said enough to show you the degradation of it. And I shall hereafter more particularly show the evil effects of it; how it is “the root of all evil.” And now I turn myself, in conclusion, to show you the more excellent way of attaining riches which shall not corrupt, and which thieves break not through to steal.

The Lord said unto the rich man, who vainly thought he had kept all the commandments from his youth, “Sell all that thou hast, and give unto the poor, and come and follow me. And he went away sorrowful, because he was exceeding rich.” On another occasion He said, “Sell all you have; make unto you bags that wax not old, lay up for yourselves treasures in the heavens.” Again He said, “Woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation;” “Woe unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger.” By which words, brethren, ye are to understand this much certainly, that every particle

of affection which you bear to this world's goods you are to renounce, every particle of trust in them you are to forego, and give your hearts unto Christ and Him only. Not only from that lowest sphere are our hearts to be redeemed, but from every superior sphere in nature to the very highest are we to be redeemed, that our souls may be free for the love of God supremely. He is the heart's Sovereign, He is the heart's Lord ; He is the heart's Husband, and He will bear no fellow in His throne. O brethren, what a horrid fall it doth imply in us that we should need to be entreated to give our hearts to God, to God their Creator, their Redeemer, to God the most high and holy, to God the most gracious and bountiful, who is light, who is love, who is truth, and the Father of blessedness ; and who hath loved us with such a love as to give His only-begotten Son that we might not perish but have everlasting life ! Once let your hearts be brought to love the Lord, dearly-beloved brethren, and everything else will fall into its proper place. The love of self will come to be the love of Christ in us ; and this will be equalled by the love of Christ in others ; out of which will arise the communion and fellowship of the saints ; and the love of our neighbour will be strong as the natural love of self. We cannot love one who is not in Christ as we love one who is in Christ, because he is not capable of receiving that Divine affection at our hands, not having yet received it at the hands of God. But we can love him as God doth love him, giving him meat in due season, and making His sun to arise upon the evil, and His rain to descend upon the unjust. And we can long for his soul's salvation, as Christ longed for the salvation of the world while yet rebellious, and gave His life a ransom for its redemption. And besides these affections, supreme love to God, the communion of saints, and the love of our neighbours, I know not any other which is entitled to the name of love. All other things are placed under our feet, and the proper affection to be entertained towards them is authority, wise and temperate and merciful command. Oh that this love of God were shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given to us ! Then should we find the proper use of money, and of every other gift of the good providence of God. And then

we should come to understand the Lord's warnings of the rich, when we discovered how we had been held bondsmen to that taskmaster in some way or other, either in care to acquire or in care to preserve. Oh that ye were redeemed from this vile affection! Oh that your souls desired the riches of Christ, and longed' after His righteousness, and were content to wait for His kingdom, and to separate yourselves from all worldly attachments in order that ye might be wholly bound unto Him to whom you are married in the covenant of His Son's gospel!

## XXVIII.

### THE LOVE OF MONEY.

I TIM. VI. 9, 10.

*But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

**T**HIS desire to be rich, or love of money, against which the apostle lifts such a warning voice, I take to be nothing different from that desire of making a fortune, or accumulating a certain amount of wealth or property to retire on, and transmit to our children,—the most common, and the most commonly avowed principle of industry amongst all classes, except the very lowest, who live, as they say, from hand to mouth. And I ground this opinion upon the context and the train of ideas with which the apostle introduceth the subject. He is exhorting servants or slaves under the yoke of bondage to count their masters worthy of all honour; and if their masters were believers, not to forget their authority over, and propriety in them, because they were brethren, but rather “to do them service, because they were faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit.” Having stated the great principle of subordination and relative duty, which the gospel relaxeth not to any, but rather bindeth upon all conditions of life, he passeth to rebuke those who taught otherwise, and intermeddled in questions of worldly policy and worldly wisdom, which had even then crept into the Church and among the teachers of the Church. What these were he saith not, but we may infer that they touched the doctrine of dutiful contentment with our lot, concerning which he had been treating, favoured a spirit of gain and worldly promo-

tion, and arose from the supposition that gain is godliness. A strange supposition indeed, and yet I know not but in these times it is a very common notion that there is a great point of religious duty in endeavouring to better our several conditions in life, as they say, and rise in the world. And I do not doubt that it would startle many a pious man who hears me if I were to undertake to shew that this ambition of a higher and more honourable station in the community is exceeding sinful; and none more than my own countrymen, amongst whom this principle hath got strangely entwined with religion, and sanctified by it. And I certainly know that in respect to slaves, the subject of which the apostle is treating, I have hardly ever been able to separate the two ideas of their emancipation and their evangelising, in the apprehension of the many Christians and Christian ministers whom I have conversed with on the subject,—such is the confusion which prevails between worldly advancement and spiritual advancement. And truly they are generally coincident, which is the reason that they are confused with one another as contemporary and co-existent, instead of being regarded as cause and effect, or to speak more correctly, as faith and the fruits of faith, as faith and the answer of the promise made to faith. The piety of our countrymen in past times impressed upon their whole character such a stamp of integrity, and temperance, and gravity, that they were as jewels among the earthly characters of other countries, and came to be prized and promoted accordingly. And this worldly advancement being found in such godly company, Satan in time hath brought it forward as in itself a very godly thing, which godly men ought to pursue and pray for, as the Gentiles do. In like manner it is that the progress of the gospel, having broken the chains of men and delivered us from arbitrary government, the question of slavery and of freedom in all its forms hath come in this country to be coupled and confused with the great question of the gospel; so that the principle of gain as godliness, however much at first sight it may revolt us, is indeed a very current principle, running deep in the stream of all our activity, both public and private.

But the apostle at once extricates the confusion by the

statement of the true principle: "Godliness with contentment is great gain." Meaning thereby, what these lands and every Christian land and every Christian man hath proved, that godliness, pursued out of the true principle of God's love in Jesus Christ, and with the true end of God's glory and our own salvation, and with a perfect contentment with our lot, and indifference to all ambitions and promotions,—godliness for the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness is indeed great gain; is followed with such temperance, and industry, and understanding, and uprightness, and cessation of quarrels, and abatement of vain expense, and quiescence of consuming passions, and good economy, and wise husbandry, and blessings of Providence, and goodly gifts of God in every kind, that it is a great, a very great gain, having the promise not only of the life which now is, but of that which is to come. But this is the Lord's doing, and done in the greatness of His liberality to those who have trusted in Him, that their faith may be encouraged, seeing those who honour Him He doth honour, and promoteth the meek, and guideth the lowly, and setteth the solitary in high places, and lifteth the poor to sit with princes, while He casteth the proud and boastful man unto the ground. But when the desire of these worldly advantages and preferments comes into the foreground of the soul amongst its principles of action, instead of standing far back among the rewards of the righteous, the contentment goes to the rear, and the glory of God is fain to take the glory of the world for a companion; mammon hath appeared in the sanctuary and most holy place, and Belial hath obtained fellowship with Christ; and all confusion and darkness gather over the soul, the last cometh to be first, and the first to be last, and the latter end of such a man is worse than the beginning, as was well evinced in Ananias and Sapphira, whose lingering avarice brought them into the unpardonable sin of lying to the Holy Ghost. Godliness with contentment is indeed great gain, is surely the way to all gain, present and to come: riches of the soul, riches of the understanding, riches of health and happiness, riches of hope, riches of love, and even riches of the world, if so the Lord should judge it to be good in this present life, and, if otherwise He should

judge, the riches in the world to come,—treasures in heaven, the possession of the earth, the inheritance of the fulness of the earth, and the crown of glory which fadeth not away.

To sustain this holy doctrine of godliness coupled with contentment as the greatest and surest gain, and to expose the deceitfulness of all worldly promises, and the short-livedness of all worldly ambitions, he addeth this grave and startling truth,—“For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us therewith be content.” A grave consideration truly, dear brethren, which ought a little to check our hastening after wealth, honour, and worldly estate, and extinguish that idea of property which we conceive ourselves to have in things over which we are but tenants at will, stewards upon a moment’s warning. Such owners, forsooth! who in a day may be without an eye to look upon it, or a hand to touch it, or a palate to taste it, or a life to enjoy it. Oh it is such a farce that Satan plays off upon the world, to engross and occupy them thus with those dresses which they strut about in for an hour, and shuffle off again to lie down in nakedness and contempt! And the grave shall feed upon them, and their glory shall perish from their dwelling in the grave. We came into the world naked and hungry, and for these natural wants the Lord will richly provide all who trust in Him, whereof He hath given assurance to every creature in those motherly stores of milky food which He prepareth on the eve of their arrival. And if He hath not given man a covering from the cold, and subjected him to other long and enduring necessities, it is that he might exercise his faith, and shew him how carefully that long season was cared for by the Lord, that he might trust the Lord in the time to come. For surely, brethren, we who need some ten or twenty years’ providing for are more beholden to the providence of God than the creatures who are no sooner dropped by the mother than they begin to provide for their own wants. This is the mystery of man’s weak, sickly, and tedious childhood, which I have not time to open at length. But surely we may well believe, that if God gives to every creature a boon at His table of providence, and a clothing for the intemperate con-

dition of his particular clime, He will much more provide for man, the most excellent of all His works, made to be His own vicegerent, and redeemed to be the heir and joint-heir of His only-begotten Son; all which I go aside to touch upon, in order to awake in your hearts, O ye of little faith, some sense of your Maker's goodness, and some trust in His careful providence, which, if the mystery of your birth will not accomplish, then let it be accomplished by the mystery of your death. See, brethren, how naked we go out of the world! Our birth-dresses are oft many, but our grave-dresses are never but one. It is enough to shroud up corruption in; it is enough to grace death's dark chambers, and to prepare us for the banquet of the worm. O brethren, what fools we are, then, to heap up treasures which can save us so little! to call those friends which so soon forsake us! to build upon such a shifting basis! There is nothing so absurd. The man who builds his house upon the sand, nay, if he built it upon the quicksand, were nothing so absurd as the man who putteth his trust in riches, which take unto themselves wings and flee away at all hours of the night and at all hours of the day, in summer and in winter, and in every season of the year. And what do you gain, brethren, by the deception of coveting them for your own, and using them for your own, and setting your heart upon them as if they were to be your own for ever? Would you have any less enjoyment of them while you lived, by considering them as God's stewardship, as God's gift for the ends of His righteousness and mercy? And when you die, would the disappointment be less or greater than the night before you had said, "Soul, take thine ease in the plentifulness and abundance of thy riches," or that you had said, "Heavenly Father, give me this day my daily bread, and lead me not into temptation?" Do you think our brother, whose praise is in this church, and who hath fallen asleep in Jesus since last Lord's day, hath any reason to regret that he used God's gifts as a stewardship, and trembled lest he should use them unworthily? Think you that the hours which he spent in visiting the poor in their habitations, and the substance which he laid out in their relief, were lost in the sight of Jesus, in whose presence his spirit now abideth?

Or think ye that in the resurrection, when the Lord's voice shall say unto the grave, "Give up," he shall be deemed worthy of a less inheritance in the world to come, that in spirit he forsook all for Christ, and viewed himself continually as the unworthy pensioner of His providence? Oh, my beloved brethren, we should take it as a token for good, when the Lord takes these ripe ears into His garner as a first-fruits of our church: and we should hear it as a very solemn voice calling unto us, "Be ye also ready; for ye know not the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh." Oh, how our sorrow is this day mitigated for our brother by the hope, the well-grounded hope, that he sleepeth in Jesus, and shall come with Him in the day of His coming, which draweth nigh, when the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we who remain until the coming of the Lord shall be changed. Let me tell you, brethren, that the two strongest desires which ever breathed in his soul were, the desire of close communion with the Church of Christ and the servants of the Lord, to whose company he is now joined, and the desire of visiting the poor in their habitations, saying unto his brethren, "Come, let us go down amongst the poor distressed weavers, and bring them consolation and help." Ah, brethren! and I have good grounds to know that his letters of business were letters also of piety, acknowledging the Lord's hand in these times, and requiring his correspondents to acknowledge it also. And he is taken from us, taken from the evil to come; and very suddenly also. And oh, my brethren, let us lay it to heart, and not vex the Lord with our worldliness and ingratitude, lest He cast us off utterly as an idolatrous and insufferable people. O brethren, it were very sweet to me to have such a testimony to render over the departure of you all; and when it shall please the Lord to call me, I would that such a one might be able to be pronounced over me by the hearts of this people. And now let us the more earnestly set ourselves together to exhort and provoke one another to give up this desire of being rich, and this love of money, which is the pestilence both of the Church and of the world at this day.

There can be no doubt, therefore, dearly beloved brethren,  
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from all the context, that the temper of soul which the apostle reproves in the text is not engrossing avarice nor grudging penury, from which I can easily suppose every one hearing me is exempt; but discontentment with our present lot and a desire to rise into higher station or greater affluence, from which, I fear, there be very few of this congregation that are exempt. It is no other than the desire of a larger temporal estate, for whatever end sought; and let no one tell me that he seeks it for God's glory, because Christ hath pointedly shut that door, saying, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." In which passage He rebukes it in His disciples as an object of desire or request. Say not that you seek it for your family's good; I endeavoured to shut that door in last discourse, by shewing you that it was commonly to your family's hurt. Say not that you seek it for your soul's ease; or else I will put you down on the same road with that fool who said, when his barns were full, "Soul, take thine ease." Say not, "It is to keep up my establishment;" for what right hast thou to an establishment, thou naked-born child, thou naked dying man? Say, "It is to obtain me and my children food and raiment," and thou speakest words of soberness and piety. The Lord permittest thee that prayer. He hath even embodied it in His own divine form of words. Will you, then, dearly beloved brethren, in the strength of the Lord, cast out of your bosom, cast out of the sanctuary of your degenerate heart, that wicked desire, which hath got the upper hand of the world, and striveth hard to prevail against the Church? Will you go to, and labour in, your calling with all honest industry and upright dealing, desiring to provide things honest in the sight of all men, especially for yourselves and those of your own household, and not forgetful of the ends of charity and mercy. And while you are diligent in business, doing with all your might what your hand findeth to do, and carefully executing the trusts reposed in you, and fulfilling all the good offices of domestic men and citizens as to the Lord, will you look to Him, and to Him only, who is the disposer of all things, to whom "belongeth the earth and its fulness," for whatever it may please Him to send, be it one talent or be it

ten, not caring for the quantity, esteeming yourselves unworthy of the least of His favours, but very careful that you may be found improving the little or the much which He hath consigned to you, and ready to render in your account when He cometh?

But words of mine will little avail against that host of companions and fellow-labourers in this world's traffic with you. You are continually engaged in discourse, in correspondence, and in all the duties of busy life; and the times, the spirit of the times, are all against you. I know how you are beset. I know how sorely you are bestead. I know how you are driven with currents like the ocean, and involved in tempests like the whirlwind. I know likewise how many of you are already deeply involved by feelings of honour and also of integrity, and can hardly draw back, though you would, from venturing upon that tumultuous and stormy sea of mercantile adventures which, for the wrecks which cover it, is like our shores after a hideous storm, which is like hell from the souls which are engulfed in it. But, brethren, to you who are distressed on both hands—on the one hand by your convictions of sin, and on the other by your temptation to continue in sin—I put the simple question in the gospel, "What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" And I add this simple exhortation of the gospel, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." And, for example's sake, I ask you who are plunged in this sea of troubles, how you should feel were you to have our brother's call, who now lieth shrouded for the tomb? and before next Sabbath we should have to improve your worldliness as a beacon to the worldly, even as we have now improved his unworldliness as an encouragement to the godly.

But no; I will not dismiss these apologists so speedily. I owe them a little wisdom and instruction, to shew them how Satan, by all such addresses, derived from honour and worldly reputation, and the keeping of our credit with men, is only masking the battery which he hath built against their souls.

Thou dost set too much store, my brother, by outward obstructions. Thou shouldest look inward, and fear the lodgements of the enemy there. It is thy worldly heart, brother, which gives the world power over thee. Thou didst desire riches. Thou didst desire worldly estate. Thou, and thy wife perhaps to help thee, did desire a goodly establishment. Thou soughtest it. Thou waitest not for it from the Lord. Thou didst grasp it as thine own ; thou receivedst it not as another's. Thou usest it as thine own, and not as another's ; else if thou hadst considered it as the Lord's, and hadst burdened thy soul with its righteous occupation for His sake, thou wouldst not have grieved after it when it was removed, nor involved thyself in that game from which thou canst not now withdraw ; but thou wouldst have said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord." Brother, be not deceived ; thy heart hankereth after the Babylonish garment, the shekels of silver, and the wedge of gold, and the Lord is ready to slay thee, and therefore thou art distressed in thy soul. But if thou wilt now repent thee of thine iniquity, and shew thyself upright with God, He will shew Himself upright with thee, and send thee peace and deliverance. If thou wilt say unto thy heart, "Thou wicked heart ! thou deceitful and desperately wicked heart ! is it a light thing that thou hast deceived me ? and wouldst thou now deceive the Lord ? I offer thee, with all thine ambitions and evil affections, as an offering upon the altar of the Lord, where I will wait in emptiness and humility, and in sorrow and contrition, until the Lord shall be pleased to grant unto me my new heart, and to put a right spirit within me, to write His laws upon my heart, and to make my spirit the habitation of His holiness."

My brethren, is your citizenship on earth, or is it in heaven ? If it be on earth, then be ye ladened and burdened with earthly cares. Lay up your treasures, like the ant, against sere and wintry age. Extract, like the bee, all the sweets which you can find, and go to the grave, and perish. If your citizenship be in heaven, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, then be ye pilgrims and sojourners upon the earth, as all your fathers were ; laying up for yourselves treasures in the

heavens, and waiting for your crown of glory in the day of the revelation of the Lord, and the manifestation of the sons of God. If you be risen with Christ, then mortify your members which are upon the earth, and set your affections upon the things which are above. But and if ye think, without such decision, and determination, and mortification of the natural man, and crucifixion of the world, and forsaking of all for Christ's sake, to reach the knowledge of Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, and the conformity to His death, and to attain to the resurrection of the dead; then be it known unto you, you would bring strange fire to the altar of God, and offer strange incense in an unhallowed censer. Ye would join sin to righteousness, and unite death with life, and mingle hell with heaven, and bring back chaos again. It cannot be. The Lord hath ordained that it cannot be. Ye must forsake the world—that is, if ye would possess the world that is to come. And if ye would confess Christ, ye must renounce the world, the devil, and the flesh.

And therefore, brethren, as a minister of eternal verities, and as a pastor of the immortal soul, I do solemnly denounce, as exceeding evil in the sight of God, all desires of gain, all earnest pursuit of it, all pleasing of ourselves with the possession of it; and I do denounce, as exceeding sinful in the sight of God, the desire of wealth and worldly greatness to ourselves and to our children. And I exhort you all, as you tender the favour of Almighty God, and would eschew His fearful judgments, to withstand, to reprove, and in all ways to witness against this spirit which now resteth in the hearts of all worldly men, to stand aloof from it and to rebuke it; and to do so the more earnestly, according as in time past you likewise may have been overruled by it. Knowing the ungodliness of that spirit, knowing the misery of that bondage, you ought, if God have delivered you from the same, to become the more affectionate, the more zealous, and the more patient witnesses unto your brethren, who are still labouring under the yoke, that they may be moved in the strength of the Lord to arise and to contend against the oppressed of Israel. For methinks these times do not a little resemble the times of the bondage

of the children of Israel in Egypt, when the people of God were forced to labour, from earliest morn till latest evening, under oppressive taskmasters. And the taskmaster of this day, which hath taken liberty from us all, is the spirit of gain. It has made our poor men slaves, and it has made our rich men slaves. Oh, but if I were a man possessed of means to do it, I would set their base maxims at defiance! I would not have a servant for as little as I could get him for, and I would not have him to toil like a slave on dry bread, while I lived like a prince in idleness and eastern luxury. As the Lord liveth, the men that served me should be industrious and faithful; but they should likewise have leisure to serve their God, and bless their master, and cheer their wives and children. And if I could not bring goods to market upon such a principle, I would not bring them to market at all. And if upon such a principle I could not keep my state in Britain, then I would not keep my state in Britain at all. For, as the Lord liveth, His judgments are ready to descend upon this land, where the master cannot keep his state but by the bondage and drudgery, and penury and misery of the servant. And if riches are to be amassed on such a principle, then I say unto you, that the last times of the apostle James are arrived, and that the coming of the Lord in judgment draweth nigh.

Upon the other hand, I encourage, by every promise contained within the precious word of God, every man to put his trust in God, and pursue his calling with industry, skill, and discretion, asking sincerely for daily bread as if he had none till he received it, and eating it as God's bountiful gift; committing his future wants to Him who hath supplied the past, and leaving his children in the arms of the God who preserved their father. This is the spirit of a Christian, to occupy well his talents, whatever they be, his time, his understanding, his forecast, his reflection, as gifts of God, and address them all to the purposes of His glory, and leave the issues with Him to whom the issues belong, leave the future to Him who alone can know it and reveal it; reckoning that sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. It is not carelessness that I argue for, it is faith, where faith alone availeth; for what are all our calcu-

lations to the issue, and what are we that make them?—bubbles on the stream, now up and now down, waved hither and thither by every breath. It is not poverty I argue for, but faith in God's providence. I dare hardly trust myself to expound God's liberality to the faithful, lest Satan should use it as a bribe to make proselytes. But let me tell you that there is no economy like Christian economy, no policy like Christian honesty, no returns like those which are made by God to those who lend unto Him. Oh, I would have you to love God supremely! Oh, I would have you to trust Him for ever! Oh, I would not have a diadem put by the side of the cross of Christ! I would not dishonour His royal office of Dispenser of the fulness of the earth. Shall I not trust Him for my crust of bread, to whom I have given up my soul? Shall I not trust Him for my children's bread, to whom I gave my children, body and soul, in baptism? O brethren, I am preaching to full men in a land where this day many be starving. Learn it in your plenty. For when poverty is at the door, when want is upon the table, faith is needed, faith is then needed; and if you have it not, what will ye then do? Curse God, and die? God forbid! Therefore, dearly beloved brethren, give heed, and attend to the things which have been spoken unto you, giving ear once more while I exhort you to remember your poor famishing brethren, and while I read unto you what the apostle saith unto Timothy: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

## XXIX.

### THE LOVE OF MONEY. '

1 TIM. VI. 9, 10.

*But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

HAVING now shewn you that the lesson of the text is directed, not against covetousness or avarice, or other inordinate desires after gain, but simply against the spirit of discontentment with our present condition, the spirit of discontentment with food and raiment, the desire of realising a competency, or making a fortune, as they say; in short, that it is directed against the almost universal wish and ruling passion of every class, religious and irreligious, except perhaps the very poorest,—I proceed now to shew how, by degrees, this desire to grow in riches worketh all evil effects in the land, bringing “temptation and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.” But, first, that Satan may have no advantage over you, in listening to this discourse, I give you to wit, as I have always done, that it is not concerning the largeness of a man’s income, or the quantity of his wealth, or his station in life, that I discourse at all, because God bestows His gifts and talents in various proportions, according to His pleasure,—some of His servants enlarging, as Abraham; some of them exalting, as Joseph; some of them enriching, as Job; and to all of them fulfilling the promises of long life and prosperity, according as He may see it most meet for His own glory and their spiritual profit;—His purpose, when accomplished, being to reinvest His chosen ones in that power and royal sovereignty

over all the creatures which Adam possessed at first, which our second Adam hath purchased to Himself and to His people by His death, which He now exerciseth in the Spirit, by means of His Church upon the earth, and which He shall yet exercise with all His saints in personal and visible majesty, "when He cometh to redeem the purchased possession." So that this controversy which the apostle wageth for contentment against worldly ambition is not a controversy for poverty against plenty, or for any one station of life against another ; but for one ruling feeling of the soul, which is contentment with God's allowance, against another feeling of the soul, which is the desire of more worldly possessions. And I am now about to shew, and by His grace to commend unto the consciences of all, the great truth of our text—that once admit into the soul the desire of the world for other ends than meat and raiment to ourselves and to others, be those ends what they may, and you plunge yourself into a sea of troubles, of which no man can see the shore, and wherein the most part are drowned in destruction and perdition. It may seem to you strange that I should say desire of the world for food and raiment only, and yet I do now repeat it, and draw your attention to it thus early in the discourse, forasmuch as I believe that a true believer in Jesus, who is full of the hope of His everlasting kingdom and glory, doth so perceive the iniquity, and subtlety, and temptation, and snare, which aboundeth in all visible things, that his renewed soul would rather, if it consulted its own will, keep aloof from them, and have nothing to do with them, and dwell amongst them like a pilgrim and a stranger, and exhort others in like manner to sit loose to them ; but as he is not to consult his own will, but the will of his heavenly Father, he is content to bear the burden of the stewardship which his Lord may appoint unto him, and to constrain the sin-subjected and Satan-ruled creatures to do homage unto Him to whom belongeth all power in heaven and in earth, and so to become a spiritual earnest unto the creature of its future redemption, a first-fruits of its deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. But as to himself, the righteous man expecteth nothing and desireth nothing to

accrue from this laborious charge, save the continuance of his bodily life, and the food and the raiment necessary thereto. He expecteth no easement of care, but rather the increase thereof,—he expecteth no strengthening of the Spirit, which cometh wholly from above,—he expecteth no consolation, but oftentimes much trouble,—he repositeth no trust thereon,—he delighteth not his soul with it,—“he maketh not riches his hope, nor saith to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence. He rejoiceth not because his wealth is great, nor because his hand hath gotten much.” All the good he expecteth of it in this life is food and raiment, and he delighteth not in the variety of the former, or the costliness of the latter. He prayeth continually that his table may not be a snare unto him, and that his wardrobe may not minister unto his vanity; that his house, when filled with plenty and with fatness, may not be filled with denial of the Lord, and independence of His providence. Ah, he that innocently can get food and raiment out of this world hath made a good bargain of it, and may well be content.

Now the way in which the desire of gain and getting on in the world, as they say, proceedeth to debase the soul and lay it open to all temptations, seemeth to me nearly as follows. First, the desire to be rich in this world's goods deadeneth the desire to be rich in the knowledge and the love of God, and in the faith of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The first of all commandments is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind, and the next is to love our neighbour as ourselves; but there is no third, to love the world in any inferior degree; but, on the other hand, it is expressly written, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” And it is added, “for all that is of the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” Whence I conclude, upon the authority of the Holy Scriptures, and deliver it to you without any demonstration of my own, as a first principle of spiritual life, that to desire the world is to desire that the love of the Father may not dwell in you. Again it is

written, "We walk by faith, and not by sight;" and again, "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it;" likewise it is written, "While we look not at the things which are seen;" and again it is written, "If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Now then, brethren, if our walk is to be by faith, and if our salvation is to come from hope, and if our regards are to things not seen, and our affections on things not on the earth, how is it possible that we should love, desire, and earnestly pursue the lowest of all earthly things, without greatly prejudicing our interest in Jesus Christ, without grieving the Holy Ghost, and paralysing the spiritual life? This it is, dear brethren, and nothing else, which hinders you from conceiving faith, and enjoying the peace with God which cometh from justification by faith. The affections cannot be both on heaven and on earth; they must be removed from the one, in order to be possessed by the other. And rest assured that your bosoms shall never be filled with the Lord Jesus and His righteousness while your hand is filled with the diligence of worldly ambitions and pursuits. Hope cannot live and possession live too. The work of the Spirit is but the earnest of possession, the nourishment of hope; wherefore it is written after that passage quoted above concerning hope, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered," (Rom. viii. 26.) And, in like manner, it is written, in the 2d epistle of Peter, 1st chapter, after desiring us to add to our faith virtue, it is added that "he that lacketh these" spiritual graces "is blind, and cannot see afar off,"—that is, is like a short-sighted or mouse-eyed man, hardly able to look further than his staff's end, plodding fearfully and timorously on his way, perplexed among things expedient and useful as concerning the present moment, and, in truth, walking by the sight of his own sagacity, but wholly unable to see afar off, wholly unable to mount upon the eagle height of hope, to run the race and not be weary,

and walk in the way of the commandment, and not be faint.

Now I tell you, dear brethren, that this is exactly your own case, yea, and the case of the Church of Christ at this day. The great increase of worldly gain, the application of so much time and ingenuity to the cultivation of the things seen, the great progress of the arts of the present life, the binding down of knowledge to that lowest sphere, and the rich harvest of every kind of visible goods which have accrued from our worldly knowledge and pursuits,—all this hath brought leanness into the soul of the Church, poverty and barrenness of all spiritual fruits, expedients for principles, accommodations for resistance, self-sufficiency for humility, intellectual demonstrations for spiritual convictions, public meetings for private communions, declamations for discourses, zeal about the Bible instead of zeal for what it contains, bustle and business instead of meditation and contemplation, until I begin seriously to doubt within myself whether the faith of the reformed Church be not wholly or almost wholly extinguished, and whether its works proceed not wholly or almost wholly from the sagacity and the sight of the natural intellect and worldly wisdom, instead of proceeding out of an enlightened knowledge from faith, and assured hope of the divine promises. Wherefore, brethren, I do the more earnestly entreat and exhort you, as you wish to prosper in the peace and assurance and joy of the Holy Ghost, to be done with all these worldly trusts and expedient measures, in which religious men, in this day of ignorance and unbelief, do permit and indulge themselves. Cast your care upon God, who careth for you, who hath given you Christ, and will with Him freely give you all things, as saith the apostle, “for all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s,” (1 Cor. iii. 21-23.) And, brethren, if ye will not take this counsel, nor consent to look to the law and to the testimony, nor to listen to these wholesome words of doctrine, then do I say unto you there shall be no morning unto you. It is only to him that overcometh that Christ will give the morning star. It is only

to him that looketh unto the prophetic word of God—the light shining in a dark place—that the day will dawn, and the Daystar arise in his heart. This then, brethren, is the first temptation and snare that cometh out of the desire to be rich—the loss of faith, the loss of hope, the loss of spiritual riches, the loss of the light of the countenance of God.

And in the train of this, what follows? Everything that is evil, and nothing that is good. For as the love of God, and the faith of the message which He hath taught us by His Son, is the growth of all grace and righteousness, of all beauty and comeliness in the soul, of all honesty, purity, charity, and peace; so the decrease of the love of God and of faith in Jesus Christ is the diminishing of all these gifts and ornaments of the soul, and the increase of all the fruits of darkness and rewards of apostasy, which are destruction and perdition. First, that trust in God's providence which, like every principle of the faith of Christ, must either possess the soul entirely, or fail from it entirely, begins to be impaired according as our desire of worldly goods increaseth. What we desire we must love, and what we love we must possess, and in the possession we lose the acknowledgment of God the giver, and are pleased with our own skill and our own success. There are few prayers offered up that we may obtain that which we stand in need of, and few thanksgivings paid for that which we have received. Our labour is not pursued under the sweet sense of God's appointment, nor with the patience and resignation which are due unto His will, but out of a greedy desire of possessing, and a hasty impatience of restraint. And oh, when the mystery of God's providence in our lot is not studied, nor at all recognised, what a dark and gloomy lot it is! Oh, when the presence of God is banished from our workshops and places of business, what an inroad of the presence of Satan and his evil ministers! What a wicked scrambling for anything which they cast before us! What an envy of one another! What covetousness! What carefulness! What disappointment! And what a family is that which doth not recognise over it the providence of God! It is truly an unfathered family of orphan children: their meats unblest, their goings out and comings in unsanctified, their domestic sorrows

uncomforted, their domestic quarrels unhealed. And what a spirit is that which hath no sense of the providence of God ! how unmastered and uncontrolled, how unsoftened, how untempered !—fit neither for steadfast affection nor for patient labour,—without meekness, without gentleness, and at the mercy of every evil passion and of every worldly desire ! I would not exchange my trust in the providence of God for the realm of England ! I would not exchange my child's portion in the providence of God for the portion of princes ! And I would not exchange the reviews of God's providential dealings with me and mine for the glory of the most bright and renowned lives in the history of this world's chivalry ! But, dear brethren, I feel that if I were to set my heart upon any worldly pre-eminence or preferment, or to wish for anything but as the Lord will, this beautiful condition of the believing soul would all be marred, and could not recover itself until again I had forgotten mine own will, and, like a good and obedient son, returned to wait upon the will of my Father, and to suspend my every wish upon His goodness and mercy and truth. Therefore be assured, dearly beloved in the Lord, that until you can give up all for Christ's sake, and say, " I will follow Thee, Lord. Wife, children, father, and mother, and my own soul, I trust unto Thee, O most merciful Redeemer, and ask nothing in return but Thy forgiveness and favour and intercession. And I desire henceforth to call Thee only Lord and Master, and to receive the testimony which Thou bearest to the Father, and to do the Father's will, by Thy mediation and strengthened by Thy free Spirit ; for Thee to pursue my daily calling ; for Thee to gain and for Thee to lose, but nothing is lost that is lost for Thee ; for Thee to be honest and true ; for Thee to be patient and persevering ; for Thee to implement every office of the present life, and occupy every talent of Thy creating and redeeming bounty." I say unto you, brethren, that until we thus and thus do give ourselves up to Jesus Christ in spirit and in truth, and separate ourselves from every other master, we never, never shall enjoy the providence of God ; we never, never shall enjoy Him as a Father : " For no one knoweth

the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son doth reveal him."

When the desire to be rich in this world's goods hath obtained the victory over trust in the providence of our heavenly Father, there is nothing to prevent the spirit of this world from possessing us wholly, and bringing along with it all the attributes of a worldly man. First, Envy of those who possess that wealth which we long for, and the ordinary accompaniments of envy—fawning, hypocrisy in their presence, and bitter insinuations in their absence. And to envy of those who are in possession of the treasure of our souls will be added contempt of those who are not possessed thereof, with all the other attributes of a purse-proud man. Secondly, There will be an eager haste to obtain that upon which our soul is set, whereby we will be betrayed into acts of petty dishonesty, which the conscience testifies against, however the market-place may approve them. And the same haste to be rich will lead us into risks and adventures, sometimes with our own and sometimes with the property of others, which inflicts a double torture—that of the gambler first, then that of the debtor, who hath not wherewithal to pay; and so by degrees, previous honesty and integrity, the column of the natural man, falleth to the ground, or rather is crumbled away by the corrosion of this destructive desire to become rich. Then it makes such havoc in the temper of a man as I cannot well describe in part of a discourse; but so it is, I perceive engendered by it a fretfulness and shortness of temper, a restless unsteadiness, like the magnetic needle, which you may see even in the very eye of anxious and speculative men. Now when a man's temper is destroyed, he is the slave of every momentary embarrassment and of every untoward accident. His evenness of judgment is taken from him; he is unfitted for the sacred offices of the family, and hath paid for his wealth such a price as the whole world were dear of. I perceive, moreover, that this worldly disposition, as it gaineth a head, doth drive away all sweet affections, and set at nought all holy charities, and contemn all lofty imaginings, all flights of fancy, elegancies of sentiment, heroic deeds, and noble sacri-

fices, and everything else which cannot be rendered into pounds, shillings, and pence—the medium of their base exchange, the representative of all they hold dear.

But into these forms of the worldly man I inquire not in detail, neither exhibit their hideous deformity, being aware how weak and ineffectual are the most exact and faithful descriptions of wickedness to deliver the soul from the power and mastery of wickedness ; nor do I enter at present into the many foolish and hurtful lusts mentioned in our text as springing up in the soul which is well fattened with the supplies of riches. To know some of these you can look about you in this city, from which, if you could withdraw the wealth, you would withdraw the greater part of its enormous vices. But I conclude by warning every one of you, over and over again, that, while you pursue money, and wish to attain to a certain degree amongst moneyed men, while you are set on any worldly advancement, so as to desire it for its own sake, you cannot make progress in the grace of God. You must pluck out that right eye, you must cut off that right hand. You must be crucified unto the world, and the world crucified unto you. You must desire to live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty, and then you may expect the blessedness of the righteous. Christ forsook all for you ; you must forsake all for Christ. You must acknowledge Him. You must confess Him. You must follow Him in good and bad report. You must be content to be accounted fools for Him. You must pluck the idols from your hearts, and separate yourselves from those who worship them. This do ye, and ye shall prosper. This do ye not, and my preaching is vain and your hearing is vain, and Christ for you hath died in vain. O brethren, I am loath to part with your ear, which I may never again address. I pray you, for Christ's sake, be ye reconciled unto God. I pray you to know the Father by the revelation of the Son. Did ye but know Him, ye would trust Him. Oh, what ingratitude and unbelief it is not to trust our heavenly Father ! I admire the long-suffering and patience of God, which hath borne with us so long, and will still receive us so graciously. Dear brethren, let us not provoke our Father unto wrath by our idolatry of silver and gold.

“Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” Who would bow the knee to Satan for a poor pittance of that we shall yet govern and rule over with our Lord? Did ye but know the doctrine of the first resurrection, you then would have the weapon for casting out *this kind*. I commend you unto the Lord, and to the word of His grace, who is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

### XXX.

#### THE LOVE OF MONEY.

I TIM. VI. 9, 10.

*But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

WE come now, as we proposed, to treat of the power of covetousness, which is the desire of more than we possess, to draw away and seduce from the faith those who have already escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Satan, under this disguise, hath always appeared and is always present in the Church of God. Witness how, while yet His cloud-enveloped glory rested on the summit of Sinai, and the man Moses received the former covenant—the national constitution of Israel—Satan at the foot of the mount was deluding the sight of the people with a calf of gold, and seducing them from the worship of the present Jehovah. Wherein I think is couched this mystery, that in the ages to come, when the Prophet like unto Moses shall come again in His glory, appearing as He then appeared in flaming fire, He shall find His Church, who should have been expecting Him, worshipping the god of this world, eating and drinking, buying and selling, marrying and giving in marriage, as it was in the days of Noah. Wherefore, in His great wrath He shall break the table of the covenant with them in twain, and bring judgments upon whom He intended to have brought mercy. For covetousness, Achan and his wife and children were stoned without the camp of Israel, because he had secreted from the spoil of Jericho a goodly Babylonish garment and treasure which

God had accursed. Saul also, because he laid his hand upon the spoil of Agag the king of the Amalekites, and coveted the best of the sheep and oxen, though it was under the pretence of sacrificing them to God, for that offence had the kingdom of Israel rent from him and from his house for ever. Covetousness under religious pretences, gifts for the sake of the altar, and swearing by the gold upon the altar, and the like sanctifications of covetousness, making the temple an house of merchandise, and admiration of the golden glory of the house, were amongst the chief sins with which our Lord charged the Church in His time, and for cleaving to which they were at length overwhelmed with destruction. And as if to unite the offence with the punishment, and to hold it up in warning to the Gentile Church, that outcast people do to this day cleave unto covetousness ; and having rejected the riches of the gospel of Christ, do set their affections upon the riches of the present evil world.

It was covetousness which seduced one of the twelve apostles of the Lord, the same who carried the purse. Whereby it was signified to the Christian Church, that with great difficulty a rich man should enter into the kingdom. And covetousness was the only form of Satanic possession which was unrebuked before the majesty of Christ. The officers of power could not stand the force of the words with which He spake ; the envious Pharisees slunk away abashed from the unveiling discourses of the Lord ; but a covetous disciple—an apostle—ate meat with Him at table, went and sold Him for thirty pieces of silver, and betrayed Him with a kiss. When the Spirit was poured out at Pentecost, He so dissolved the bonds of this world that the disciples forgot their ranks, their possessions, their places, sold all that they had, and poured the price thereof at the apostles' feet. But there was one form of the worldly spirit which resisted the Holy Spirit of God, and, though ashamed in His presence, refused to give place to Him, and that obstinate spirit was covetousness, lodged in the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira, who lied unto the Holy Ghost under the strongest temptation of covetousness, and so died before the Lord in the midst of His Church. Whereby the lesson of Achan and of Saul was again repeated,

and the disciples of the spiritual dispensation were warned to have a care of covetousness as the most treacherous unto the Holy Ghost, even as it had shewn itself most treacherous to the person of the Son. The apostle Paul declareth for himself, "that he had not known sin except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Whereby I learn, that after the apostle had delivered himself from all ritual impurities and legal offences, and was blameless in the sight of the law, so that he had nothing to charge himself withal, this sin of covetousness still remained behind unexpelled from his heart, and would not be cast out by any power short of the Spirit of God revealing in him Christ Jesus, the hope of glory.

These instances, dearly beloved brethren, of the fatal power and presence of covetousness in the Church of Christ, I have brought forward that I might with the more liberty impress upon your minds the absolute necessity of guarding yourself against this spirit, which, under so many plausible pretexts and cunning disguises, presenteth itself to us always. And that I may speak unto you with the more effect and distinctness, I shall address my discourse first to the young, who are entering on the world, but yet have attained to no portion in it; secondly, to those who are actively employed in its occupations, labouring for themselves and their children, that they may provide things honest in the sight of all men; thirdly, to those upon whom God hath bestowed substance, and whom He hath endowed with worldly possessions. To these three divisions of the Church of Christ I would now address myself, and warn them against the danger of covetousness, and its various attempts to make shipwreck of their souls.

And, first, I would address my discourse unto the young, yet so that the aged may also profit by it. The apostle John, in his first epistle, hath these words—"I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one;" and again, "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." And it is so, dear brethren, that in our youth we must either overcome the wicked one, or the wicked one will overcome us. And if he overcome us in our youth, there remaineth little hope for us

in our old age. For the cases indeed are exceeding few in which those who have refused the call in youth accept it in their old age. What I mean by youth is, the period of our prime, when body and soul are putting forth the flower of their strength and beauty. And I say, that if during this spring and summer of our mortal life, we prefer to be grafted into the corrupt tree of Satan, then shall the fruit which we bring forth in autumn be also corrupt, and rejected from the garner of God. Therefore, my young friends, let no delusive ideas of reformation and repentance at some future time steal from you this precious season, during which you are sowing either to the flesh or to the Spirit;—if to the flesh, to reap corruption; if to the Spirit, to reap life everlasting.

Now, I shall suppose—which is the case with the generality of those which hear me, especially of those baptized into our Church—that, like Timothy, ye have known the Scriptures from your youth, and, like the young man in the gospel, have honoured your father and your mother, and kept the other commandments of God from your youth. For it is not against the breaches of the first nine commandments, but against the breach of the tenth, that I now warn you. I take you to be steady, industrious, and trustworthy youths, of whom no one needeth to be ashamed before the world, and I do now instruct you how Satan hath yet other arrows in his quiver with which to destroy your life, and make you in the end a dishonour and a loss unto the Church of Christ.

Your very moral integrity, your uprightness and high sense of honour and duty, your contempt of loose living, and abhorrency of all dishonesty and dissimulation, he will convert into a blind, and thereby hide from you those cunning approaches which, by covetousness, he is making upon your souls; and he will lay before you the honourable places and preferments of the world; he will present to you the beauty of an honest and unblemished reputation, the blessedness of a peaceful home and thriving family, the solid worth of an honest and substantial citizen, the power and glory of an extensive worldly establishment, the great good which we would consult for in our elevated and influential state of society. Oh! words, at least in my mouth, serve little to de-

scribe that picture which that spirit of all delusion doth paint with colours of enchantment in the mind of every honest and virtuous youth at his setting out in life. But, my dear brethren, you can look inward and see it, or you can look backward and remember it; for it is the sure and certain temptation with which he assaileth those whom he cannot take by the lusts of the flesh. As to our Lord, he first made his approach on the side of craving appetite, and that failing him, upon the side of honourable and noble possessions. So to all Christ's disciples, he doth make his approach first on the side of fleshly indulgences; and that failing him, on the side of covetousness or worldly aggrandisement, which in all beautiful varieties he presenteth to the soul.

This, then, is what the honourable and virtuous and pure in the Church of Christ have to guard themselves against. It is through the imagination that he presents the beautiful object to the hope. The eye of hope peruseth its loveliness, and is enamoured of it. Desire awakeneth within the heart, and nothing will pacify the soul but possession; for as the old philosopher well defined happiness to be *pax desiderii*,—the peace or rest of desire,—so is it found in reality that when desire is awakened, nothing can give it rest but possession. When Satan thus hath taken the spirit up into his lofty mountain, and shewed unto her the kingdoms of the earth and their glory, and allowed her a while to peruse the glorious vision, until desire is all kindled and on fire, he then discovers the cloven foot, and says, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." That is to say, he gives the soul to understand that these goodly establishments of life whereof I spake are not to be attained unto but by the possession of riches; that you cannot have a house without money to purchase it, nor a family without money to keep it, nor a business conducted without capital to go upon, nor an estate possessed without a price, and so on, through the whole catalogue of his worldly proverbs. "Therefore," says he, "young man, be careful; young man, be industrious; young man, be sober, and thou shalt gain the object upon which thy heart is set." So he bows down the soul in worship of riches, as the great means of worldly good. He seduces the soul to

covetousness. He bows down the upright face of men, which should look up to God for every gift. He bows down the back of men always to expect his blessings from the ground, and search for his immortality in the dust. Oh, his deceptions! how many and how artful they are!

Now, brethren, if you would unmask him—if you would expose him to his face, and see through all his cunning disguises, all these well-glossed lies, put this question to him in the spirit, “And whose are riches, Satan? Thou sayest house, family, rank, and estate cannot be had without riches, and how are riches to be had? Are they not also the gift of God? The earth and its fulness, belong they not unto the Lord? Is not the silver and the gold likewise the Lord’s? Thou sayest, The kingdoms are thine, and the glory of them. But how long shall they be thine, thou false deceiver? And what investiture canst thou give in that realm wherein thou art only the usurper for a day? Thou cunning despoiler, thou wouldst rob my soul of its interest in Jesus, the rightful possessor, that when He comes to reward the faithful stewards with cities and with kingdoms, I may be cast along with thee into outer darkness, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Begone from me, thou usurper! I will not acknowledge thy right in anything. Begone from me, thou murderer of my fathers! Let enmity be between my seed and thee for ever. Thou king of this world! thou art the destroyer of it. Worship thee? Thou author of sin and death, and suffering and sorrow! I will help to bruise thee. I will suffer in order to dispossess thee. To the widest extent of my power will I resist thee. And I will honour the Lord Jesus as my King, and I will wait for Him, and I will suffer with Him, and I will be in poverty with Him, if so it pleaseth my heavenly Father; and I will count it all honour to suffer for His sake, if so be I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead, and be of those who shall be counted worthy of that age, wherein a hundredfold shall be rendered to me for that which in this age I have lost on His account; and not a few years of uncertain life to enjoy it in, but life everlasting in the presence of my God and His Christ for ever and ever.”

Thus it is, young men, that ye have to overcome the wicked

one, when he would seduce you with the lures of this world, by putting all his suggestions to this test, whether there be in them any memorial of God, or any devotedness to His honour and glory. For be ye assured of this, that nothing is God's wherein God is not present, no scheme good which doth not propose the end of His glory ; and that being devoid of this, however honest and worthy it may appear, it is a deception of Satan, and one of his devices for the ruin of your souls, whose chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever. And when he findeth you determinately bent upon this course of devoting yourselves to God, he will change himself into an angel of light, and come the third time against you, with wily and crafty seductions derived from the word of God ; into which, however, I enter not at present, because they pertain not to my present subject, which concerneth only his seductions by means of the bribes of this present evil world.

If you do not resist him, my dear friends, but give place to him, he will lead you deeper and deeper into his snare, from which it will be more and more difficult to effect your escape. The hopes and desires of worldly things are strong, but the possession of them is stronger still. "Is thy servant a dog," said Hazael to Elisha, "that he should do this great thing?" But said the prophet, "The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria." The possession of the world finisheth what the desire of it began, and completes the worldling, bringing with it cares, and enjoyments, and occupations manifold, fears of loss, joy of gain, desire of more, intoxications of prosperity, the tastes of luxury and grandeur, the lust of power, the gratification of will, pride, and high-mindedness, and a thousand other foolish and wicked lusts which drown men in perdition. Therefore think not, my young friends, that there is any time so seasonable as that in which I now contemplate you, still unharnessed and still unyoked in the burden—fulfilling the offices of servants and agents to others, whose interests you have to consult, and not your own, or living under the shelter of your father's roof, with no burden lying upon you but to honour your father and mother, and bring their gray hairs with gladness to the grave.

Be stirred up, therefore, young men and young women, to

renounce the world, as your baptism requireth of you, and to forsake all and follow Jesus. Honour Him, and He will honour you. Trust in Him, and He will never disappoint you. Be not careful of to-morrow—sufficient for to-day is the evil thereof. In your youth rejoice in God, for the days of darkness in this world are many. And oh, desire not high things, but let your soul delight itself in God. Be not careful for anything, but by prayer and supplication make your wants known unto God. Remember how uncertain is your life; it is but a vapour which continueth for a day. And what can the wealth of this world avail you upon a death-bed or in the world unseen? or what is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? O brethren, let me entreat you affectionately to give yourselves unto God, and He will perform unto you your heart's desire. If you doubt His liberality, read His promises; if you doubt His faithfulness, read His word. Did Joseph suffer by trusting Him? Did Daniel or the three children suffer by trusting Him, or Ruth, or Esther, or even the harlot Rahab? Who ever suffered by trusting the Lord? Search in all the general assembly of the first-born in heaven, and you shall find not one. Who ever gained by trusting the world, the devil, and the flesh? Search all the synagogue of Satan, and you shall find not one. It is only one fortnight, young men, since I stood over the sick-bed of one of the strongest of you; and in a few hours he was with his Judge. It was only last night, young women, I stood over the sick-bed of lately one of the healthiest among you, and ere this I should judge she also may be with her Judge. And both had renounced the world and both had embraced the Lord. And why do ye linger, and why do ye tarry? Have you no presentiment, have you no fear of your end, have you no love of Christ, have you no desire of His kingdom? Feel you not how much better it were to be with the Lord? The Lord will enrich you, the Lord will establish you. But, like Himself, you must travel through the valley of humility to your kingdom. You lose your soul if you embrace the things which are seen now. They must be ransomed and redeemed ere they can be meet for your possession. You are but pilgrims and strangers

amongst them at present, but the time cometh, yea, and is at hand, when you shall be possessors indeed, rulers and governors and judges in the earth. For as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Forsake all, then, and follow Jesus. Forsake the desire and hope of this world, and you shall embrace the desire and hope of the world to come. And whatever the Lord bestoweth of present things in stewardship you will receive as from the Lord, and use unto the glory of the Lord. But nothing shall you use unto His glory except you deny yourself; for these two things, self and Christ, cannot exist together. It must be ourselves no longer, but Christ dwelling in us. We are not alone, but the children of our Father, from whom if we feel separate, then indeed are we joined unto Satan. For it hath been Satan's wish to separate us, dear brethren, from the love of God.

And oh, it is Christ's work to join us to the love of God! Dear brethren, this is the work of Christ, that we should know God as our Father; this is the perfection of Christ's work, that we should be able to receive God as our Father, and be received of Him as His children. The work of Christ is not completed in you until you can confide in God as your Father,—as a Father, love to be in His presence,—as a Father, love to make your requests known to Him,—as a Father, desire His will and do it,—as a Father, fear to offend Him,—and as the Almighty Father, repose all things to His careful keeping. Take observation, my dear brethren, of what I now say, that until we have the affection of the child revealed in us, the faith of Christ hath not had its perfect work, and the Holy Ghost hath not wholly possessed us. While we love not prayer, while we delight not in private and secret communion with God, while we love not the tabernacles of His house, while we acknowledge not His providence, while our lip refuseth His praise, and our hand His service, while we fear death and are in apprehension of the judgment, we are yet deficient in the power of faith and of the Holy Ghost. We have not yet known the Son while yet we know not the Father. For it is the will of the Father, that by knowing His Son we should be adopted as sons, become heirs of God, and joint

heirs with Christ. You cannot say that first petition of the Lord's prayer, "Our Father," but by the Holy Ghost, which the Son baptizeth you withal.

And it is for want of this revelation of the Father that we go a-whoring after the world and the things of the world. Doth a child doubt the tenderness of its mother, or the ready help of its father? If that father or mother were almighty, would the child have any fears for bread and raiment? Do the children of a king have any fears about their daily food, or their provision in the world? Do they go about to submit themselves to this low artifice and that degrading servitude in order to obtain a niggard portion of that land to the princely inheritance whereof they are born? And you, are you not the children of an Almighty Father? and you, are you not the sons of an Eternal King? Therefore why harass your souls? why confederate with the enemies of your royal Father? Oh, it is shameful! Oh, it is inconceivably sinful! Nothing but our ignorance, our intolerable ignorance, and fearful blindness to the true character of God in Christ as our reconciled Father, could account for it. And have we the light, and are in such darkness? Yes, we have the light, and are in such darkness. Now I pray the Lord that we may not remain so another day. Oh, come unto Jesus, that ye may know the richness of your inheritance with the saints, and be delivered from the power of this present evil world!

## XXXI.

### COVETOUSNESS PRODUCED BY NATURAL AFFECTION.

LUKE XIV. 26.

*If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*

THE avenue to covetousness which Satan finds through our best and strongest natural affections—that is, the temptation to which men are liable of being betrayed, out of duty to their wives and children, into worldly schemes and desires, and a coveting of worldly riches—is a subject so delicately entwined with the best affections of the natural man, and so sanctioned by the most approved and venerable maxims of wisdom, that I hardly know in what way to approach it with the liberty of a Christian minister, or to treat it according to its actual demerit when measured by the standard of the word of God ; and therefore I set out by solemnly declaring that the Lord regardeth every man, in the first place, as the guardian under providence of his own life, and while he prays in simplicity, “Give me this day my daily bread,” the Lord requireth of him industriously to occupy his talents, and strength, and time, and means to procure that daily sustenance which he besought, the Christian rule being short and strict, “If a man will not work, neither should he eat ;” in the second place, as the guardian and supporter of his wife, not from any refinement of sentiment concerning the weaker sex, but from the fearful sanction of the primeval curse, which made this partition of the sorrowful burden—to man that he should labour the earth with the sweat of his brow, to woman that she should cleave unto her husband, and

reverently own his authority, and bear the sorrows of conception and child-birth with all their consequent cares. Wherefore we regard it as the calling of man to labour the earth and its productions, and bring forth from them nourishment for his wife not less than for himself; so to exercise his superior strength and his superior understanding, and so also to attemper, by bountiful and liberal gifts, the sovereignty which God hath endued him withal, as it is written in the 104th Psalm—"Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening." And, in the third place, with respect to the children, the immortal souls whom God may give them, He doth regard them as responsible in so solemn a way that it is written, "If any man provide not for his own, especially they of his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." And lest words and commandments and statutes, however much repeated, might prove insufficient to express the whole of this vast obligation of the parent to the child, the Lord hath, in the sacrament of baptism, signified that a child is His own special charge, property, and possession, with the care of which He invests a father and mother, holding them sponsors for the supply not only of material but of spiritual aliment, the father being to all intents and purposes as much bound to nurse the mind and will of the child as the mother is to nurse his body. Yea, and without separating the charge of father and mother, both are bound in all spiritual penalties to train up their little ones in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Wherefore the Lord hath in the fifth commandment enjoined upon children by all penalties that they should not only acknowledge but honour this authority of their parents, whereof Christ gave us the example. And furthermore, we assert that these offices of a man to his wife and to his children, this well-ordered constitution of the family, hath nowhere been seen in this world in that loveliness and beauty in which the gospel hath produced it,—man being everywhere, except in Christendom, a tyrant, woman a slave, and children at the best regarded only with an animal affection, and often made an object of traffic, and often exposed to premature death. Nay more, in Christendom itself the purity and love and mutual attach-

ment of families will be found to be in proportion to the diffusion of the light of the gospel.

Now, dearly-beloved brethren, it will be found to be a constant rule that, according as any doctrine of the gospel is more prominent than another in the scheme of salvation, and according as any principle is more prominent in the system of Christian duty, Satan doth pervert the one and the other with the more cunning artifice. They are the strongholds of truth of which he seeks to possess himself. They are the disguises which he assumes when he would appear as an angel of light. For example, in doctrine there are no two points against which he rageth so violently as these two, the doctrines of election according to grace, and of justification by faith,—the two pillars of the Church. And I do not believe there is any duty which he converts to his own worldly ends so much as this, the strongest, of providing for ourselves, for our wives, and for our children. I take you to witness this day, who now hear me, if it be not so, that the cares and concerns of this world have either completely involved your souls, or are daily striving to do so by this very consideration of providing for yourselves and those of your own household. It is so natural, it is so honourable, it is so Christian, that Satan propounds it continually in our ear as he did Scripture to our Lord in His several temptations; and under this covert he introduces covetousness. It is first for daily bread, and to provide things honest in the sight of all men; but after a while, it becomes in order to keep our rank and appearance in the world; and after a while, it is in order to provide for their comfortable settlement in the world; and finally, that they may be independent of the cruelties of the world when we are gone. And so under this covert he will make way for luxury and vanity, and emulation and ambition, and every other passion of the natural man, always covering it with the venerable disguise of an honest and honourable regard to our families, and readily quoting texts of Scripture in his favour.

Now, brethren, in handling this subject two methods offered themselves to my mind—the former, by exposing the progress of the artifice, and endeavouring to untwist the web of subtlety, which is so various as hardly to be brought under any regular

system ; the other, to search for some principle in the gospel, which being ever present to the mind of believers, with whom my discourse is held, might defend them against every various form of this temptation. And I preferred the latter, both because of its greater simplicity, and because I perceive it to have been our Lord's own method, who in His threefold temptation did always offer as His shield a great principle of the word of God :—First, “ Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God ;” secondly, “ Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve ;” thirdly, “ Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”

Being, then, about to treat of that form of covetousness with which Satan stealeth upon the unwary hearts of fathers and mothers under the disguise of affection and duty, saying, “ Thou hast children to provide for, therefore thou shouldest be careful. Thou mayest be suddenly taken from them, and thou shouldest have something laid up for them in store. Thou shouldest desire also to see them prosperous and thriving in the world ; and rising above rather than falling beneath your station,”—we have sought for a passage of Scripture which should express the principle which exposeth all these sophisms, and have fixed upon the remarkable text now read in your hearing. The Lord was followed by great multitudes, even as the preaching of His gospel is now, and “ He turned and said unto them,” as I now say unto you, “ If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.” By which words we are not to understand that He imposed it as a duty upon His disciples, or as a condition of discipleship, that we should actually hate our father and mother, and brother and sister, any more than that we should hate our own life ; for He came not to destroy the law and the prophets. And to the young man who came inquiring after eternal life, He laid it down as one of the commandments, to “ honour his father and mother ;” and when the young man answered and said, “ All these things have I kept from my youth,” Jesus said unto him, “ One thing thou lackest : go thy way, sell whatsoever thou

hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven : and come, take up the cross, and follow me." Now this gives us to understand the proper meaning of our Lord in the text to be, that there is a love of father and mother, and brother and sister, which may be present in the heart and something still be lacking, before we can come to Him, and therefore that these are not signs of discipleship, but, upon the other hand, may be the very means used by Satan to prevent us from following the Lord. On which account those affections must be hated,—that is, *that form of them which disinclineth us from following Jesus*. If they resist our allegiance unto the Lord, they must be resisted. If they contend against Him, we must contend against them. If they hate Christ, we must hate them and love Choist; and, in one word, *our soul must not know any affection to be compared with its affection unto Christ*, who created us, who hath provided for us, whose gift to us our parents and our family are, who hath ransomed us by His blood, and quickened us by His Spirit, and made us children of our heavenly Father, and prepared for us mansions in the everlasting house of His glory.

But having thus preferred Christ before our chiefest joy, and sacrificed every natural affection which causeth enmity against Him, and said, "Behold, Thy servant hath forsaken all for Thy sake; be it therefore unto him according to Thy will. Thou art my Lord, and beside Thee I will have none else. For Thee I have forgotten my kindred and my father's house, that I may be at liberty to serve Thy God and my God, Thy Father and my Father, and to be Thy witness and Thy confessor upon the earth,"—the Lord to such an acquiescent soul doth vouchsafe such sweet tokens of love and rich effusions of His gracious Spirit, that instead of nature's stunted and selfish affections, instead of nature's envious and party attachments and love of the few, for indifference and perhaps hatred to the many, there springs that affection of a holy and heavenly kind such as God beareth unto His children and Christ beareth unto His brethren; such wrestlings of love and bowels of compassion unto all, as the Son, and the Spirit which proceedeth from the Father, manifest to us

the lost and sinful children of men. And let nature say, and let the world say, whether in all their poetry, or sentiment, or romance, they have conceived any such love as is manifested in the gospel of the grace of God. If Jacob's eleven children be a specimen of natural love, then Joseph's love is the specimen of spiritual or divine love; for the former, in the best minds, is all crossed with envy and selfishness, and is in truth but a higher, purer form of selfishness; whereas the latter is love, truly so called, casting out envy and selfishness, and willing to bestow affection wherever it will be received, and to whatever extent it will be received, so that a true disciple of Jesus is like Jesus himself, blessing and not cursing, continually going about doing good, and seeking whom he may save; not enriched by withholding, not impoverished by imparting of those streams of holy affection which are fed from that fountain of living waters within him which springeth up unto everlasting life.

We, therefore, who are disciples, we who have professed to follow Jesus, ought ever to remember that the same principle of self-renunciation and renunciation of all our natural loves and friendships which was the beginning and condition of our being received by Him, must continue to be the condition of our being retained with Him; and therefore we must so love our parents and our children, and all that depend upon us, as not to interfere with our love to Christ, but, upon the other hand, to flow from it as from the fountain, and to acknowledge it as its source and origin. This is the true meaning of forsaking all for Him—that we hold all in subordination to Him, and acknowledge Him as the Lord of all. This is the true meaning of being His disciples—that we consent to be taught by Him what is good and what is evil, what is to be loved and what is to be hated. This also is “to walk after the Spirit”—that we be spiritually-minded, and obey the affections of the Spirit, and be not carnally-minded, or obedient to the affections of nature. He that is born of God hath no more to do with nature, but to contend against it; for “the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” It is not a natural, but a spiritual life that we live in Christ Jesus. How

far it is natural it is unrenewed, and requireth to be redeemed. So far as it is spiritual it is renewed, and hath been redeemed. I know that there be two laws in every renewed man : the law which is after the flesh, and the law which is after the spirit ; and that these two are contrary the one to the other. But I likewise know that the end of the former is death, and that the end of the latter is life and peace. Therefore if any man stand up for nature as a light to walk by, or a law to be ruled by, he hath either not known Christ or he hath rejected Him, and can in neither case be called His disciple. And this indeed is the great apostasy of our literature, and also of much of our affection, that they set up Nature as a good, venerable, and holy mother, instead of looking upon her as fallen and wicked, and captive under the power of darkness. Which, brethren, take not amiss, as if I scorned natural affection, (over the captivity of which I do lament—over its griefs, and sorrows, and delusions, and short-lived existence, and instability, and ungodliness, and death,) while I shew how it may and ought to be redeemed from all those hateful conditions, and brought under the government and patronage and benediction of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Now, brethren, these are the principles of the doctrine of Christ,—the *first principles*,—being, in other words, nothing more or less than the doctrine of our fallen nature, and the necessity of being born again in order to please God, and inherit the kingdom of heaven. These things to attempt to prove, would be to treat you not as disciples. And indeed what proof could I give but the words of Holy Scripture? Such as—“As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name,” (John i. 12 ;) “So they that are in the flesh cannot please God,” (Rom. viii. 8 ;) “No man cometh unto the Father, but by me,” (John xiv. 6 ;) and, perhaps, strongest of all, our very text ; for it hath this peculiarity above all other passages of Scripture I know of, that it taketh Nature in her finest moods and pronounceth her hateful. It entereth into the holy of holies of Nature’s temple, and saith, “The worship of God is not in all this place.” There can be no question now concerning the words “flesh” and “nature,” which the apostle,

in his more philosophic style, employs; but it is father, mother, brother, sister, wife, and children, which are pronounced to bear against Christ. And these not unnatural or unkindly kindred, but the kindred of any man, that is, of every man, or, in other words, the universal affection, as it is found, in all lands and in all ages, constituted by nature. Nay, and to deliver the proposition from all cavil, or possibility of cavil, it is added, "and hate his own life also;" which word embraceth nature's whole empire, for what is life but the presence and possession of all things seen, heard, smelt, tasted, and felt—the presence and possession of all objects, beloved, hoped, and desired? Yet this orb of natural being, this whole continent of human nature, by whatever lovely objects tenanted, with whatever costly jewels filled, by whatever beautiful scenes varied,—this vicissitude of being, and possibility of being, from the cradle to the grave, called *life*,—all that flesh is heir to of good and of ill, we are called upon in the text to hate—that is, to know its hatefulness in the sight of God, to believe its possession of Satan, to crucify ourselves to it, and to have it crucified unto us. All this is the preliminary step, the first condition towards our becoming children of the Spirit, disciples of Christ, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.

If the affections of the natural man were thus doubted and distrusted, were thus disallowed and hated, as opposite to the spiritual man, everything in the economy of the house, and in our industry out-of-doors, for the sake of our family, would proceed after a godly sort, and would tend to nourish those spiritual affections and spiritual principles according to which everything went on, and the door would be shut against the artifices of Satan to steal upon parents with his worldly and covetous maxims, disguised under the fair appearance of duty and affection. The souls of those intrusted to our care, with their spiritual wants, would so far transcend their bodies with their natural wants; the bread of life and the water of salvation would be in so much more request than the meat which perisheth; and the world to come, with all its obligations and preparations, so much more thought upon than the enjoyments and advantages of the present evil world, that in

such a family there would be little danger of a worldly, vain, and ungodly spirit creeping in with the progress of its increase in honour or wealth. And the industry of husband and of wife, thus moved, would be what it ought to be, a pleasant duty, undertaken by Christ's commandment for the sake of ourselves and others intrusted to us—a patient endurance of the curse and bondage under which we now lie, “to eat our bread with the sweat of our brow.” Nay, it would be a cheerful diligence to give the creatures a foretaste of this redemption which also abideth them. And to spirits thus regulated and attuned to the harmonies of divine love, there would be a great liberty of ranging up and down, and sporting in innocent joy with all the creatures, every sense taking its proper entertainment from the ministry of its proper hand-maidens in the creation of God, and giving them kind benedictions in return. Every affection, of equal friendship and of kindred blood, of honourable deference to the superior office-bearers of the family and of the state, and of courteous and kindly condescension to the inferior office-bearers of the family and of the state,—yea, moreover, and every instinct, now purified and refined from the animal to the spiritual superintendency,—yea, and every passion, now brought under holy government, would have their rightful scope and pleasant liberty under the generous and bountiful administration of the Holy Spirit, whose fruits are peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, &c. For the law of God is perfect liberty—it is the royal law of liberty—it is the glorious liberty of the sons of God—sweeter than honey is to the mouth, or the light of the morning unto the eyes, or liberty to the captive, or the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound.

But, dearly beloved brethren, if you will not suffer the love of God to rule in your hearts, and to bring into obedience and subjection every other affection, you may rest assured that Satan will take you at unawares, and gain access to you upon that side which is open. And wherefore open? Because it hath not been given up to the defence and protection of Almighty God, who alone can prevail against the seducer. For example, if husband loveth wife, or wife loveth husband,

as God only should be loved, even though all other affections be submitted, by that alone will Satan find access to ruin you, as heretofore he did Adam when Eve had fallen. If you place yourself instead of Providence to your children,—that is, if you look upon those as yours, and not God's, whom God hath promised to sustain by means of your industry, and to bless you in blessing them, then it will come to pass assuredly that all your endeavours for your families' support will lead you away from God, and fight hard against the Holy Spirit, and in the end pervert your souls wholly. It is a great truth of ethics or morals, that men are generally ruined on the side of their virtues; which, being rendered into spiritual language, is, that Satan steals in upon us where we think we are best protected against him. Now, what is that side in a Christian but there where he hath seen least of his own heart's sinfulness, where he hath suspected the world least—yielded to nature a greater credit, and permitted to her a larger license? And surely, if there be one thing more than another in which we are so overcome, it is in this affection of which I treat. To guard you against which I have set forth the regulating principle of the Lord. Love your children in the Lord. Let your children be so many calls upon you to love the Lord more. If you love them, you will desire their salvation; and how are they to be saved but by the Lord? Come to Him, then, for the sake of your children. Go not to the world for their sake. The world cannot but deceive and ruin them, as it would deceive and ruin you. You are not the providence of your children, nor is your arm the almighty power which createth food for their craving wants. God worketh by your means, it is true; but remember that God is the Worker, and you only the instrument, and go not to yield unto the instrument the honour which is due unto Him that worketh therewith. I say not, Relax in your industry. God forbid! But I say, Labour in the Lord and with the Lord. The bread is not blessed which is not expected and received from the Lord. It is unblessed, I had almost said it is accursed. And I might well say so when I look upon the cursed appetites and tastes and dispositions to which such worldly bread doth minister; for there is upon it the curse of God. Or I should rather say, the

curse which is presently upon all visible creation hath not been taken out of it by the redeeming virtue of divine grace. Every creature of God is good, being received with thanksgiving and sanctified by prayer. And no creature is otherwise good. Know then, Christians, the great charge which God taketh of your children, whereof baptism is the holy assurance. Hath He not claimed them as His by the very name of Father? and hath He not combined with that holy pledge the Son and the Holy Ghost, whom He hath sent forth to beget in the children a new life and a meetness for an everlasting kingdom? And will He grudge the bread and water which He bestoweth upon all, yea, upon the lion's cubs which roar out of their den, and upon the raven's brood which cry to Him from their nest? O brethren, there is in that sacrament of baptism such a consolation to every Christian parent as the world knoweth not of. I would you would often regard it with the eye of faith. The promises are to you and to your children. And that this is not to be interpreted of the Jews only, was well shewn in God's first act of grace to the Gentiles, when Cornelius and his whole household were made partakers of the gift,—to that wicked gaoler of Philippi, who having been just rescued from the fearful crime of suicide, cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" and was answered, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house;" and he and all his house were straightway baptized. What fear you for your children, then? Trust the providence of God for them also. Was Christ, who is now King of providence, unmindful of or harsh to little children? or did He not honour them and bless them when He rebuked apostolical men? Therefore I say unto you, and entreat you to believe for your children as for yourself, to pray for them as for yourself, to hope for them as for yourself, and to be diligent for them as for yourself,—that is, diligent in the Lord.

And observe what will follow. If thus giving your labour to God, and calling upon His name continually for daily bread, He should see it good to send you more than you besought,—yea, to bless your basket and your store exceedingly,—it is His gift, and it hath come with a blessing; it

hath been sanctified with prayer and thanksgiving, and therefore it may be called good. And you may well conceive that the Lord hath a mind to favour you and your children in the sight of His enemies, as He did Abraham, and Joseph, and Esther, and Ruth, and almost all His servants after they had been well proved for a while. And so He may for a while prove you with scanty poverty; but it is the trial of your faith, repine not. He may prove you by keeping you bare, as He did Job; but if you have been walking with God, it is the trial of your faith, repine not. It may please Him to enlarge you twofold, and you may have portions to divide unto your sons and your daughters, as the patriarchs had; and, as I have said, if they have come to you in the exercise of trust in God's providence, and a desire to fulfil His will, you may transmit them to your children without any of that fearful apprehension which must ever go with wealth that has been accumulated in the service of Satan,—that is, without any devout acknowledgment of God,—not without much instruction of the righteous way in which they came, and much diligent instruction as to the righteous way in which they should be occupied, and not without the striking example of both to your own peace. And then I think you may expect they will be blessed.

O brethren, for one saint who is tried with adversity beyond what he can bear, there are hundreds and thousands spoiled by the plentifulness of the Lord's bounty. Not that the Lord would ruin any of His saints, but that He is very bountiful. He giveth liberally, and upbraideth not. And we are not enough aware of the lurking enemy, that cannot be thoroughly cleared out of any visible gift till Christ shall come and cast him out, and bind him in the bottomless pit. Therefore rather fear the full than the scanty hand of the Lord. But fear neither; rather love both, saying, "The Lord is wisest, and knoweth what is best for me and mine. His will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." But go not to forget Him because He is bountiful. Because He hath increased your store and filled your home with children, and with other wealth, go not to forsake Him and cleave unto the world, and unto the sense, and unto the great and vain ones

of the earth. Ah, that is ingratitude indeed ! A worldling who has been paying his court to the harlot world may well dally in the Delilah's lap ; but you who have sought for God, and been by God enriched, to forsake His people, and abide with the Philistines, and dally in the Delilah's lap, is fearful apostasy, and will cost you first the shearing of the locks of your strength, the darkening of your eyes to heavenly light, shameful labour in the mill of bondage, and basest mockery of the God whom you worshipped ; and they will end by making of you a toy to sport in honour of their gods of silver and gold.

But time permitteth me not to take all the advantage which I might take of the great principle which I laid down ; and I have but to exhort you once more, as you value your children, not to be tempted away from God to the world. For what fatherless and orphan children were they then, when you had become worldly ! What fathers, what mothers, of Christian, of baptized children were you then ! Say you reaped the harvest of a thousand fields, and counted your gold by thousands, what were that to the starving and starved souls of your children ? Can you purchase prayers ? can you buy grace and mercy, bribe justice, and by great moneys take enfeoffment for them or for yourself of an estate in the kingdom and world to come ? O brethren, these are conceits and follies which I would not insult you with, had they not been sanctified by false priests and erroneous doctrine. But ye hold none of those things.

And why, then, if ye hold them not, act as if ye held them, and labour for the bread that perisheth to yourselves and to your immortal children, as if it could feed and clothe and convert their souls ! Now, be ye not any longer so, dear brethren, but remember that God is to be loved above all objects of love, and Christ to be followed despite of all lets and hindrances, however tender and strong ; and that if God be loved and Christ be followed after, they will assuredly look unto your children, whom they regard as a part of yourselves, and will bless your store, and not suffer you to be in straits or under affliction but for your chastisement and greater good, for the advancement of the Church of Christ, and of

God's eternal glory. My dearly beloved brethren in the Lord ! take what hath now been said into your most serious consideration, and meditate on it in the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and the Lord may be pleased, nay, assuredly is pleased at the time, to deliver you if you have gone astray into worldliness, and bring you back to the way of His commandments, which is perfect peace and liberty, faith and security, contentment and blessedness, to you and to your children. Therefore, shall we not all conclude, in the words of Joshua the son of Nun, the chief in the host of Israel, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord ?"

## XXXII.

### THE PEACEFULNESS OF THOSE WHO CAST THEIR CARE UPON GOD.

PHIL. IV. 7.

*The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

WHEN the heavenly host sung the anthem of our Redeemer's birth to the shepherds of Bethlehem, the strain ran thus—"Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will toward men." Which wonderful birth the prophet Isaiah foreseeing from afar, designed Him "the Prince of Peace." And the apostle Peter, when opening the door unto the Gentiles, thus describeth His mission—"The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: he is Lord of all." And the apostle Paul in like manner describeth the work of Christ and the ministry of the gospel in these words: "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." And, finally, our Lord himself, in His parting discourse with His disciples, bequeaths to them peace as their inheritance, derived from Himself—"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

This peace, which it is Christ's peculiar prerogative to bestow upon His people, and in the fulness of time upon the whole earth, doth imply a condition of discord and disturbance everywhere existing, until He shall come to compose

it. This dispeace we witness continually around us in the warring and contending elements of nature—the wind warring with the waves, and the waves with the dry land, and the fire devouring the life of all things. And we behold it next in the creatures who inhabit every element of nature,—the air, the sea, and the earth,—whereof the stronger do prey upon the weaker. And we behold it also in the society of men, whose wars form the chief part of their history, and whose quarrels it is the continual occupation of law and justice to redress. But nowhere is this state of trouble and disquietude seen so constantly without us as it is felt within us, under its various forms, of cares arising from worldly possessions, of envy arising from those we love not, and jealousy from those we do love, of fears from our enemies, and anxieties from our friends, and unceasing alarms from those we fondly call our own. Not to speak of the conscience, at all times and in all circumstances dissatisfied with the faculties and powers under her control, and ill at ease towards God,—sore pained when she looks back upon an ill-ordered life, sadly dejected when she surveys the anarchy of her present dominion, and very miserable when she looks forward to the responsible and awful future. Oh, oh, it is a troubled scene! A very sea of troubles which cannot rest, is this visible and sensible world, from the utmost bounds of vision's ken, (for the stars themselves are some of them discerned to be in conflagration,) to the profoundest deep of human consciousness, where dwell nothing but broken images of beauty, and wild notes of disturbed harmony, and ghastly spectres of departed blessedness, which have in them some witness of a peaceful world lost, and some indistinct promise of a peaceful world to be restored.

This chaos of life—for it is not life, but the rude element out of which life shall come—is Satan's dominion, the prince of darkness and the archangel of death, who, according to the Scripture, is named the "prince of the power of the air," the "ruler of the darkness of this world," "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Adam and Eve in Paradise were the germ of a new system of moral and intellectual and physical being, and they were but

the germ of it, and Satan, by his power of craftiness and mystery of delusion, stole the bud from the all-supporting tree of life, and grafted it into the all-destroying tree of death; and so this present system of life in death—but the life overruled by the death—hath been evolved, and humanity, the system of pure and blessed humanity, hath become such a jarred and confused thing, such a tissue of contradictions, such a reckoning of disappointed hopes and blighted promises, such a mass of discontent and grievance and affliction, as passeth all understanding. Yea, verily, if the peace which Christ restoreth to this troubled sea of nature passeth all understanding, then the dispeace likewise passeth all understanding.

And, brethren, as I said, there is light in this realm of darkness, and a spirit labouring against this bondage of Satan; from whence ariseth a continual painfulness, and fretfulness, and affliction unto the comprehensive and reflecting mind. Yes, there is a quick and a sensitive spirit in man which takes not well that its creation-rights and possessions should have been thus invaded and snatched away from her quiet enjoyment. The anarch of old cannot quench the light of human reason, that it should not send its indignant glances over his works of darkness; nor so extinguish the life of conscience, that it should not feel its low and lost estate; though, alas! the noblest strains which she sings are strains of lamentation by the rivers of her captivity, where she long abode dejected, with her harp hung upon the willows, hoping for better days, and hearing the rumour of them from afar in the mouths of God's prophetic messengers, until at length, when the fulness of time was come, it was sung by the angels of the Lord unto the shepherds of Bethlehem: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

There can be no doubt from this the annunciation of the Saviour's birth, as well as from all the scriptures quoted above, that the true end of His mission from God the Father is to

restore all that was lost, and to redeem all that was enslaved by the powers of darkness and cruelty. And this being His mission, I doubt no more of its perfect accomplishment than I do of the word of God, wherein that accomplishment is not only published, but described with the most minute and exact descriptions. For those predictions in the Psalms and the Prophets and the Apocalypse, of the restoration and renovation of all things, are not the emblazoning of fancy, or the poetry of imagination, or the hieroglyphics of unintelligible mystery; but they are the handwriting of verity, the sure and certain annunciations of holy truth, the delineation of a state of this world yet to come, when its redemption shall be complete, and discord shall be for ever banished from the harmonious and peaceful earth. And I thank no man for rendering me those things to what they call *common sense*, and making them commensurate with human calculations, and constructing to me a *natural millennium* out of the fragments of his own conception, which are to me as idle tales and certain fallacies; for the prophets who prophesied of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should be revealed knew not, though they inquired diligently, what or what manner of time the Spirit of God which was in them did signify. How shalt thou, then, my brother, with thy *common sense* be able to construct me into a plain and intelligible thing, that future dispensation which, compared with the present, is as heaven compared with the earth; wherefore indeed it is called the kingdom of heaven, and therefore it is called in our text "the peace of God, that passeth all understanding?"

Now, of this peace of God that passeth all understanding, we who believe in Jesus Christ, and are joined to Him in the fellowship of the blessed Spirit, do experience a first-fruits, which giveth us assurance of a plentiful harvest. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The burden of sin is removed from the conscience by the propitiation through faith in the blood of Christ. We are no longer aliens from the commonwealth of His people, or strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but being now in Christ Jesus, we who were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ, who

is our peace, who came and preached peace to them who were afar off, and to them who were nigh, and thus we have free access into the present grace of the gospel, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. The soul which hath been able to embrace Christ Jesus as its Saviour through the operation of the Holy Spirit is able to embrace God as its Father; and the love of God is shed abroad in that heart in which Christ hath been revealed by the new birth of the Holy Ghost. There is begotten a holy confidence in the Almighty—a blessed sense of His omnipresence—a secure feeling of His Fatherly care—a high recognition of His sovereign will—a full persuasion of His unerring wisdom—and an abiding conviction of His goodness and bounty in all our lot. In one word, there is the consciousness that whatever befalleth and whatever betideth, “all things work together for good to them who love God, and are the called according to His purpose.” This is the health and strength of the spiritual man; thus he lives, and moves, and hath his being.

Now, brethren, observe you how this new relation into which the soul is brought by the faith of Jesus and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, doth work necessarily new relations of peace and of contentment towards all with whom and all with which we have to do, and tendeth to cessation from quarrels and from cares, and from fears and all other disturbers of our peace, being made partakers of the divine nature and members of Christ Jesus, in whom dwelleth likewise the Spirit of Christ. We cease from our own selfish and devilish inclinations, and from pursuing the ends of our own commodity and advantage, we devote ourselves to the chief end of man, which is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever. We are no longer creatures of the evil one, and slaves of Satan, to do his offices of malice and anger and wickedness; but we are the children of God, to do the offices for sinful men which the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost have done for us, and desire to do for all. So that there is diffused over our social and sympathetic faculties a gentleness and forbearance towards all—a meekness, and mercy, and forgiveness towards our enemies, patience of wrong, mildness of power, condescension of dignity, communicativeness of knowledge, and, in one

word, charity, Christian charity, which suffereth long. Thus composed towards men, what think you, brethren? is not a Christian possessed with a wonderful peace of soul and a wonderful deliverance from envy, and grieving, and grudging, from the tossings of passion, and from the clashings of strife, which, compared with his former state, I can liken to nothing but the unruffled face of the deep, reflecting heaven's unclouded azure, compared with the tossings, and heavings, and mountainous upliftings of that same deep when it contendeth with the fierce tempests and furious wrath of the heavens?

Not less wonderful, and above all understanding, is the state of contentment and Divine subordination into which the soul, over which Christ hath gotten the dominion, is brought towards the events of a mysterious and uncertain Providence, whose very mystery and uncertainty become to him the nourishment of that faith and love out of which the streams of his blessedness do all flow. For if he could discern and foresee all things, his faculty of faith and trust would stand him in no stead. The uncertainty of the future and the instability of the present is all the province and property of faith, over which she exceedingly rejoiceth to spread all her wings. When a thing becomes present, sight begins to dispute it with her; but the future is all her own. What a world of trouble in this quarter does our faith send off from us, it were very pleasing to describe. Our own safety, the salvation of the spirit, sleepeth under the overshadowing wings of the Lord Jesus, as the brood under the wings of their parent. My soul is safe. Ah! my soul is safe, come what will. They cannot reach my spirit with all their threatenings and persecutions and bereavement. Satan may take law and privilege against me, and God may suffer him to be as boundless in his cruelty as heretofore he was to Job; but my turtle-dove, my darling, he cannot hurt, whose life is bound up in the bundle of life with my Lord. And my body, too, the diseased afflicted flesh, Satan's tent, sin's banqueting-house, and death's palace, he cannot prevent of its rich inheritance against the day of the Lord, nor hinder that all these attempts upon my redeemed soul, through the gates of my yet unredeemed flesh, should not strengthen my earnest looking and groaning for the adop-

tion, that is, the redemption of the body. For though they should reduce me to the lowest, vilest misery, so that I should sit in the ashes and scrape myself with a potsherd, and my friends should be ashamed for me, and my very wife ready to abandon me, they cannot hinder me from exclaiming with Job, when brought to this extreme pass of misery, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Now, brethren, I say unto you all, that the hope of the body's redemption at the resurrection of the just, which is the first resurrection, ought—yea, and would, had not that tenet, with all that flows from it, fallen into oblivion—to produce the same blessed fruits in contenting and pacifying the body under disease and pain, which the sense of his present redemption worketh upon the spirit. To which blessed purpose we find it to have been used in the days of the apostles, when the brethren, being in constant peril of the body and all its possessions, were not slack to receive the doctrine of its glorious resurrection at the coming of the Lord. Nor were the apostles slack to administer it, as we find in all their epistles, especially in the 4th chapter of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, and the 15th chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. Oh that I saw Christians, by the faith of their Lord's resurrection, overcoming the body and all its troubles, supplying all its wants, and quieting all its cares and discontents, as by the faith of the Lord's death the soul overcomes all her diseases, and is fed with her daily food, yea, refreshed as with marrow and with fatness! For the resurrection is to the body what the death of Christ is to the spirit of man—the one the sacrifice for sin and the condemnation of sin in the flesh; the other, the victory of flesh over death and the grave, and its endowment of God with the heirship of the world. For even as Pentecost was to the spirit, so shall there be a day of justification unto the body, the day of the manifestation of the sons of God, for which all "creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now: and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," (Rom. viii. 22, 23.) And see you, brethren, I believe that such a revival

of faith on the part of the Church is about to take place, when it will be manifested once more that our faith is the victory of the world, and that Christians can endow one another with worldly as well as spiritual gifts; and that a Christian merchant can be without care, and a Christian subject without political zeal, and a Christian minister without bonds, and a Christian missionary without a stipulated salary; which at present is a thing wholly incomprehensible to the Church visible, and all but incomprehensible to the Church invisible.

And, brethren, if the body be thus brought into a state of faithful contentment and uncareful repose, yea, of hopeful gladness and glory, it followeth of course that the outward estate, which is but the body's table to eat from, and her wardrobe to be clothed out of, and her gallery for the entertainment of the senses, and her museum, and so forth, according to her various faculties, will come to be harmless and powerless over the peace with which we are possessed. For the outward world is but Satan's minion, or rather his mistress for seducing the body withal, whose affections being all preoccupied with the glories of the resurrection and the espousals of Christ, contemneth and doth defy all such assaults of the enemy. As a betrothed virgin or a wedded wife, rich in love to her husband, is not to be harmed by the most cunning seductions, through the midst of which she passeth in the beauty and majesty of unsullied chastity, so doth the man whose soul hath been united to Christ by the Holy Spirit, and whose body is waiting in hope for the same blessed union at the resurrection, move without fear or danger amongst the temptations and trials of the visible world. And its cares lose the hold over him, and its wealth, and its power, and its glory become mystery; he discerneth their false pretensions; he is acquainted with the master of iniquity whom they serve; he foreseeeth the time when they shall serve another, even Christ, and when the meanest soul under Him shall have the rule and government of the world. For the creatures are good in themselves, and are subjected to vanity, not of their own will, but by reason of Him who hath subjected them in hope.

Thus it is that the heart, which in Scripture is commonly placed for the conscience or the will, and the mind or intellect,

which is as it were the eye unto the former, are set at rest, and possessed of the peace that passeth all understanding. The heart being taught to submit its affections to the will of God, and its desire to His gracious purposes, the mind being directed by the wisdom of Divine revelation in all things which concern faith and godliness, wanderings of the heart are brought back to the narrow way of righteousness, and errors of the mind are rectified by the word of God, and a spirit of pure and holy love towards all the righteous, a spirit of meek endurance and unwearied intercession for all the wicked, is shed abroad in the soul. And, O brethren, when the soul recovereth her consciousness of right, and the mind her consciousness of truth, the peace which is spread abroad over the inward man doth indeed pass all understanding and all description, and cannot otherwise be known but in the very experience of it; which I do most earnestly entreat you to seek after.

For you know, dearly-beloved brethren, that none of these, the fruits of a living faith, are to be realised without earnest prayer, which is the recognition of the sovereignty of the Father Almighty in the gift: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Christ with all His offices is the gift of the Father: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And Christ never encouraged the presumptuous hope that He could do more than communicate His blessings to those whom the Father willed, and whom the Father drew unto Him. To the Father, therefore, our first appeal is to be made in prayer, if we wish cessation from worldly cares and perplexities, as it is written in the text, "Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." This is a point of doctrine little understood, yet most necessary to be understood, that the curse which imposeth upon us such unnumbered woes can only be withdrawn by the Father; and till it is withdrawn, the work of salvation availeth only to condemn us. For it

teacheth us the goodwill of the Father, His love, His sacrifice on our account,—the whole of Christ's work being a demonstration of the Father's love. But Christ honoureth His Father, wherefore the Father honoureth Him. Therefore, my brethren, it is not much reading of the word, which is certainly a great means of grace, nor much hearing of it preached, which is a greater, but earnest prayer, faithful prayer, and waiting for the answer of prayer, which will obtain for you the peace concerning which I have discoursed. Therefore, if you have felt domestic afflictions and sorrows, and now feel many anxious thoughts about your dear families, pray unto God that through Jesus Christ He would give you peace and rest ; if cares concerning to-morrow's provision for the mouths which look up to you, do the same ; if fears about your good name, if apprehensions about your place in honourable life, if sore and grievous troubles about the backsliding Church, if miserable forebodings concerning the rebellious and disbelieving world,—in whatever form cares and troubles assail you, make your requests known unto God ; and if you ask in faith, it shall be done unto you.

Furthermore and finally, think not that this peace which passeth all understanding hath any kindred with indolence or indifference to the honest and worthy pursuits of life ; which mistake the apostle foreseeing, adds immediately after our text these words : " Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." By which he signifies that his doctrine of cessation from all care was not cessation from any honest calling or pursuit, but merely cessation from Satan's malicious abuse thereof to the dispeace and peril of our souls. Nay, brethren, on the other hand, the man of God will be stirred up to fight with greater zeal and strenuousness against Satan, being for this purpose called out and chosen, and endowed with the weapons of the Spirit. Light cannot help putting darkness to flight, nor righteousness wickedness, and peace trouble. And accordingly, a godly man's life is an active warfare to drive Satan from

some part or other in the visible world, reclaim some of his usurpations to their rightful owners, and to give the very creature a foretaste of its redemption. And, brethren, what are the beautiful fields of a Christian land, what are its just laws, and purer society, and sounder principles, but so much of the creature reclaimed from Satan's barbarous sway into the foretaste of its perfect redemption? For we cannot drive Satan out of it, but we can straiten him in it, and what earnest the Spirit gives our body of its redemption we can give the creature of its redemption. Whence it comes to pass that a good man's active life is a continual witness to the power and purpose of God by His Son to redeem the fallen world, and restore the whole of humanity to a sinless and blessed state.

O brethren, that what we have said concerning the care of the world, the causes and cure of it, and the blessed peace consequent upon its cure, might be blessed of God to work in you this peace that passeth all understanding, coupled and conjoined with every active office to do good, and to promote peace, and to make known unto men the great hope which they have laid up for them in store through Jesus Christ !

### XXXIII.

#### THE STRIVINGS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

**I**F, as hath been declared upon the authority of Christ, there be in human nature no more than the hints and intimations, and at the best the earthly types and degenerate forms of those divine principles and graces, tempers and dispositions, which the Holy Spirit produceth at the new birth, and if the outward world, in its best conditions of prosperity and loveliest dresses of beauty, avail not, however studied, to awake from their deep sleep those spiritual faculties, but doth in general engross and embrate us more and more the more we converse with it, it becomes most important to know—and He who thus strips us of our natural prerogatives is beholden to teach us—by what other means that better being shall be produced within our souls, and that new birth which is unto eternal life be accomplished upon the poor creatures, whom He hath thus cut out of all those natural resources. To answer this question, you have but to remember that which hath been taught you as the constant doctrine of the Scriptures, that the Holy Spirit, by which we are sealed unto the day of redemption, doth proceed from the Father and the Son, of whose willingness to send Him forth we have the most ample assurances in the word of truth. Christ teacheth that the Father's will to grant the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him is stronger than the strongest of the affections, passions, or instincts which the human breast containeth, or the life of man in all its variety doth exhibit: "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much

more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Than which, I think, language cannot embody an assurance more sure, a care more strong, a promise more cheerful, a resolution of doubt and uncertainty so complete. For it is not possible that a father should refuse that meat, of which he has plenty, to his hungry and craving child. Nay, he were not a father who would not divide his last morsel with his craving, hungry child. But for a father to sport with the craving want of his child, when he himself had store, is beyond all accident or possibility of nature. That he should make it the occasion of mocking it with a stone, or staying it with a scorpion, or administering to its ravenous appetite some noxious and poisonous thing, is not in the annals of crime, or amongst the wild wanderings of madness. I suppose that such a thing was never dreamt of by the moodiest and most melancholy spirit, nor imagined by poet or orator for the sake of illustration, nor in words embodied until it was embodied in the discourse of the most tender-hearted Being, in order to represent, by the wildest, wickedest, most unnatural of all human possibilities, the still more wild and more unnatural creed, that our Father in heaven, who is love, who is light, who is bounty, should refuse His Holy Spirit, who is also love, light, and bounty,—not enriched by being withheld, not impoverished by being given,—to the prayers of any one of His needy children upon earth, who should lift up a true prayer, a fervent desire to possess His blessed presence. So much for the Father's willingness, who, having given us His only-begotten and dearly-beloved Son, will with Him freely give us all things.

Then for the willingness of the Son, whose divine prerogative it is along with the Father to dispense the Holy Spirit unto men, who can doubt of the largeness and unweariedness of His love, who bowed the heavens and came down to the earth; who from the bosom of the Father came to the very dust of death, for no other end than to make atonement for sinners, and effectual intercession for the transgressors, which was greater than the love of man; according to His own words, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends!" To represent His love to us

the extremes of human affection did not afford to Paul a similitude, who in a rapture of amazement exclaimed, "Oh, the height and the depth, the length and the breadth of the love of Christ," and who thus laboureth to express the measure: "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." And how saved by His life? In this very way of sending forth His Spirit, according to His own tender declaration to His disciples sorrowing over His departure,—*"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."* And again,—*"Because I have said these things, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."* And accordingly, it was the first act of His exaltation in glory to be mindful of His humble folk upon the earth, and to dispense to them the Holy Ghost in great abundance. Wheretof agree the words of the psalm: *"Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men, yea, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation."*

It is most manifest, therefore, from the word of God, whose testimony throughout is in the same strain of assurance, that both the Father and the Son are full of love to the souls of sinful men, and full of the desire that they should be possessed with the washing of regeneration and the purging of

the Holy Ghost. And it is the grossest mistake, the most horrid blasphemy, to say that they do at any time, out of a poverty of love, withhold from the hearts of needy men the portion and inheritance of their salvation which hath been purchased by the death of Christ Jesus. Whoever can resist the strength and strenuousness of God's declarations upon this matter, is faithless to the highest pitch of disbelief, and doth tempt the Lord exceedingly, and may provoke the Lord to swear in His wrath that such an unbelieving soul shall not enter into His blessed rest. And I warn you who hear me, that the only possible way by which to bring about upon yourselves excommunication from the universal portion, is to turn a deaf ear to it, to be so daring as to say, "The Lord meaneth not what He speaketh;" that He hath made you but to curse you; that Christ hath died but to aggravate your condemnation; that for others there may be such a heavenly boon, but for you, you are doomed to loss and to perdition. Oh, but the Lord may give such provoking scorners enough of this sauciness of spirit! Oh, but He may turn upon them as He did upon Israel in the day of the provocation, when He said, "Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles which I did in Egypt and the wilderness, have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers; neither shall any of them that provoked me see it. And ye shall know my breach of promise." So to those hardened men who, having such strong promises of the Holy Spirit,—promises fearfully and terribly shewn,—shall yet dare to disbelieve and count the promise vain; or those who, in a mock humility or affected sense of guiltiness, or haply the overwhelming fearfulness of impending wrath, shall refuse to take any comfort from it to themselves, and persevere in their obstinacy against the calls of ministers, and the calls of inward conscience,—to them who so provoke the Lord, He may perhaps in His hot indignation give forth a like condemnation: "Well, and since ye will hold it vain, ye shall feel it to be vain; since ye count me altogether such a one as yourselves, unrelenting, ye shall find me such as you account me, unrelenting; and when you shall cry you shall

not be heard ; and when you shall draw nigh I shall stand afar off, saith the Lord."

But I trust, my beloved brethren, there is no one amongst you who hath the daring to set up his own construction of the Divine character against the Lord's most strong and positive asseverations, but that you are willing to believe that it is the purpose of God, and His promise, and His covenant, and His desire and delight and chiefest joy, to send forth the Holy Ghost into the hearts of men, that they may be converted from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to serve the living God. And being so persuaded of your faith to believe the declaration of the Father and the Son to send forth the Holy Spirit into your hearts, hear me now, while I shew you the willingness of the Spirit to come and make His abode with you.

To suppose the contrary, is to suppose discord and warfare in the Godhead, where there is undisturbed and everlasting harmony. For it is not with God as with man, whose will and word and work do oft jar and fight with one another. For as Christ exclaimed, "Lo, I come; to do thy will I take delight;" and as the Father delighteth in His Son the more because He laid down His life for men; so the Spirit also delighteth in perfecting the work which the Father hath willed and the Son declared for our salvation. He maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. He is long-suffering and patient in His strugglings with men; so that in the last extremity of their wickedness, just before the universal consumption of the deluge, He was still struggling against the corruption, until the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." And when David had been guilty of the mortal sins of adultery and murder, the Spirit had not utterly forsaken him, for he still continued to pray,—*"Take not thy Holy Spirit away from me; restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit;"* because it is the proper office of the Holy Spirit to quicken life, and He delighteth therein. It is not more properly God's disposition to love than it is the Holy Spirit's disposition to quicken. It was not congenial with Christ's nature to die, but full of agony, yet to conquer

death He died ; nor to inhabit sinful flesh, yet to conquer sin in the flesh He did condescend to inhabit it. And the Father having, against the nature of the strongest love, given up His Son to death for the stronger love He had in restoring holiness and blessedness ; and the Son, from the same strongest affection of the Godhead, having against His nature, which is life, submitted to incarnation and death ; shall the Spirit, when the portals have been opened wide, and those whom it is His very being to obey say, Go to those whom He, as they, doth ever love to redeem,—shall He delay or hesitate ? shall He not long to go ? and having gone, shall He not make continual and urgent suit for admission into their hearts, that the work of God there may be completed ?

And oh, believe me, beloved brethren, if it were given me to lay open the secrets of the spiritual world, and to discover unto you the entreaties, the urgent entreaties, with which the Holy Spirit hath entreated every one of you, I could reveal a hardness and impenitence of heart, a daring resolution and wilfulness to resist His entreaties, which would astound and affright you with terrible dismay. If the Father hath such an unspeakable longing to bestow the Spirit, and the Son have testified by His incarnation and death the unspeakable love which He hath towards the sanctification of your souls, think you, seeing all the occasions of Providence and means of grace are in their hands, that they can have been slack to occupy them all in making the overtures of that Spirit whereby alone we are to be saved ? Love seeks out occasions of demonstrating itself with all diligence ; and they say, in proverbial spirit, that where there is the mind there is never wanting the way. Rest assured, therefore, that you have been solicited by all methods which are proper to responsible creatures. All hath been done to move and redeem you which can be done without violence to your personality. The Lord will not treat us, as things, by force, but as persons, presenting to us all whereby the will of a person can be actuated : entreaties that you would ask, assurances that if you ask you will receive, demonstrations of His willingness to give in having given to you His only-begotten Son, and declarations that with Him He will freely give us all things. He hath

given you the history of His dealings with men since the world began, wherein He hath proved Himself to be, not easy of wrath, but easy of mercy ; not free to persecute, but free to save. The history of His ancient people hath He given you, whom He entreats again and again and a thousand times, that they would return unto Him and be saved ; whom yet He hath not utterly cast off, so faithful is His covenant, but will redeem with a great redemption. The ministry of the word from Sabbath to Sabbath hath been vouchsafed to you. The throne of God hath been accessible to the voice of every want. Forgiveness of sins hath been proclaimed amongst you, and the Divine grace manifested in every possible form. The quickening of the Divine Spirit hath been freely offered to every one who will pray the Father and believe the word. And no means have been withheld of moving our souls to receive and accept this great salvation. Everything hath been done but the using of force, which doth not consist with the condition of a responsible person. We were no longer fit for the worship and service of God if we needed to be actuated by force. We were stocks or stones or senseless things, but men no longer ; we were parts and pieces of the machine of nature, not spirits whose proper office and business it is to subject nature under our feet, and hold communion with the Father of spirits. Therefore assure yourselves, my beloved brethren, that nothing more can be done, even of God, than hath been done, without wholly violating and subverting the fabric of our being, which He wisheth to restore to its former divine life, and to redeem from its present animal life, but verily not to destroy ; to redeem, but not to annihilate ; to save, but not to destroy.

And if you will sink inward into the depths of your spiritual nature, and take counsel with the spiritual faculties of conscience and reflection, to ascertain how they have been affected by all this ministry of grace and consolation, which the Lord hath ministered unto man since the world began, and whereof He hath preserved the history and the substance in the Holy Scriptures, which are read and meditated amongst us every Sabbath-day, ye will find that the powers of the inward man have not been unmoved or unconvinced by all

which hath been so wisely and so graciously administered to their necessities. Beloved brethren, have you not had the answer of the conscience to the word which hath been read and preached in the midst of you? When I have read the law of God, in its purity and its holiness, hath not your conscience said, "I am guilty?" And yet the law is honourable, and just, and good. Have not the flimsy notions of right and wrong contracted in the concourses of men, vanished in dismay before the voice of the awful law of God? And have you not felt, "If this word be true, all is not right with me?" And hath not a still voice within borne witness that the word is true, and that the law is not more severe than just; holy, though terrible; that though it pronounceth the verdict of death, death upon the best of our actions, the conscience answereth, "The verdict nevertheless is just. I feel that I am rightfully condemned, and that I deserve to die?" I ask every one who hath been wont to hear the holiness of God discoursed of from this place, if he hath not felt a concern come over his soul? By this concern the Spirit would work,—He would quicken it into a conviction of sin,—He would bring out of it a godly sorrow for sin, which worketh repentance not to be repented of,—and onwards He would lead you to the desire of salvation, and a thirst after the good word of God. Thus blessed would you have been, had not that concern of the soul for itself been swallowed up by the concerns of the body for itself, and the manifold concerns of the present earthly life; and so it comes to pass that the spark dies, and is with more difficulty revived again, and again with more difficulty revived, dead to admonition, deaf to entreaty, until we become joined to our idols, when the Lord is pleased to let us alone.

O brethren, I could carry this appeal from the law to the gospel of the grace of Christ, and ask you, with the same sincerity, if you have not been convinced in your inward man, that He spake as never man spake, and loved as never man loved, and is truly the Son of the living God? Poor, poor, have been our representations of His glorious excellency. His offices have been very tamely represented to you; they remain as an ocean of discourse, upon which we have hardly launched our frail bark. But still we are persuaded that your

souls have been untouched with the glories of the person of Christ, and the everlasting issues of His mighty work ; the unspeakable love manifested in His incarnation ; the unmeasured grace and mercy of His works ; the unsearchable wisdom of His words ; His long-suffering patience of evil treatments ; the inward agonies of His combat with the powers of darkness ; the openness of His heart and hand towards the most sinful who did repent ; the precious sacrifice of Himself, as the Lamb slain for the sins of the world ; and His complete conquest and condemnation of sin in the flesh, after He had yielded up His life of His own accord, a willing sacrifice for our offences ; His conquest over the powers of death and the grave, and His resurrection from the tomb, in the greatness of His strength ; His ascension into glory, and His sitting at the right hand of God, expecting till all His enemies shall be put under His feet ; His gift of the Holy Ghost unto all who believed, with His royal care of His people, and preservation of them in all their trials, and deliverance of them from all their enemies. Then the mighty events of human salvation, wrought out by our Surety, and the offices of His mediation which He continues to carry on by the operation of His blessed Spirit, have not been presented to your souls, even in the imperfect way in which they have been presented, without stirring in them some affections of love and desire after the blessed and gracious Saviour, who brought grace and truth into the earth, and made known unto men the promise and the hope of everlasting life. Now, out of these buddings of affection the Spirit would have made fruit to arise ; these inclinations of the soul to Christ He would have strengthened into strong chords of love, and inseparable bands of communion, and in the end possessed your soul with assurance of salvation, and peace of conscience, love and joy in the Holy Ghost, and every other blessed experience of the Christian life, if ye had not quenched this and disallowed His operation. But, brethren, if ye have allowed these very affections to be worn away and consumed by the force of earthly affections or natural passion, and the evil attainments of this miserable life in which we abide at present, then have you made shipwreck upon this voyage also, by your own wilful-

ness to steer the vessel upon the quicksands where all are wrecked.

Thus the great overtures of faith and love which the Spirit makes are not heard in the whirlwind or the storm, or in the earthquake, but in the still small voice; which if we regard not, then it shall never wax louder nor more powerful to the ear of the soul. But if we regard the soft overtures of reconciliation, then shall it be to our soul the first gentle sigh of the haven to the becalmed mariner; or like the first streak of the morning to the benighted traveller. But if so be that ye have not yet felt the first coming of the Spirit, which cometh like the gentle breeze, nor the dawning of the daystar upon your hearts, which like the morning light shineth more and more unto the perfect day; then be assured that you can make no progress until you receive that beginning of gifts, the Holy Spirit of promise, who is entirely the master of our sanctification, as Christ is of our redemption, whose coming you must expect, by devoting your souls to prayer and to faith—the former expressive of your desire to have, the latter of your willingness to use the gift; the former being the manner of the soul's communion with the Father, the latter the manner of its communion with the Son, from whom the Spirit proceedeth, and to whom the soul must make diligent request, in order to be possessed of the gift. Which two conditions of the soul, named prayer and faith, though they are generally understood to be only two among many, do in truth, when properly understood, divide between them the empire of the whole capacity: prayer being the homage of the will, with all its offspring of desires, purposes, hopes, and resolutions, whereby activity is put in motion; faith being the homage of the mind, with all the faculties of thought, feeling, taste, imagination, whereby truth is apprehended, to direct and guide activity. So that whosoever hath his soul in the constant condition of desiring the Divine gift, and of being instructed by the Divine Teacher, doth exercise himself the best towards obtaining the gift of the Holy Ghost, and fulfilling all righteousness. And we shall be conscious of His presence by the gradual conversion of our heart and mind to the law of God by the gospel of Christ. Thus have we the Spirit more and more granted to

us, when we are more and more enabled to submit our will to the will of the Father, and to submit our views and wishes of truth to the wisdom which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. For it is the office of the Spirit to bring us unto Christ with strong faith and affection ; while it is the office of Christ to bring us unto the Father with entire willingness and cheerful obedience. And he only hath the Spirit who, standing in the grace of the gospel, and expecting to be justified by the righteousness of Christ, doth yet, with full purpose and affection of heart, yield obedience to the will of God ; the whole mystery of the revelation of the Trinity, of which the gospel is but an expanded representation, being to make us holy as God is holy, and pure as He is pure.

Therefore, I do entreat you, my dearly beloved brethren, as ye would prosper in the divine life, to betake yourselves with earnest prayer to the throne of divine grace, and with faith and diligence to the study of the word of God, that ye may be made partakers of the Holy Spirit ; which cannot otherwise come into the souls of men than in the patient and sincere exercise of these two spiritual occupations, and whose coming doth not otherwise shew itself than in conferring them, and thereby preparing and filling the soul for the holy performance of all its grandeur.

Which entreaties, oft repeated, I do now press upon you the more being about to remove from you for a short season ; and I pray the Lord so to instruct your spirits and minds in the way of righteousness, that when we shall meet again we shall find each other strengthened and confirmed in the spiritual and divine life, of which we shall speak to you still more particularly in our next discourse.

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## XXXIV.

### MARKS OF THE DIVINE LIFE.

**D**EARLY beloved brethren, having shewn you in our former discourse the great love which the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost have towards the sinful souls of men, and with what strong expressions they utter their desire of our salvation, and with what wondrous acts they have testified the same, we now come to the practical question, which we would put to all this people, and upon which we would enlarge this night, before we separate for a season, Have you been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come? To answer this question according to the truth, and if not able now to answer it in the affirmative, to be able hereafter to rejoice in that blessed conviction, let every one attend to the things which are about to be delivered, in dependence upon the grace of God.

The life which we live is the only sure evidence whether we are inheriting the promises, or are still trusting in the flat-teries and delusions of the present evil world. That is, not the mere outward life of eating and drinking, and speaking and acting, whereof other men are observers; for this is but a sorry picture of human life, and by no means that position from which the whole may safely be judged; seeing that by the very circumstance of its being under the common eye, and watched over by the common opinion, and inspected even by the searching of law, but, most of all, being under those mighty sweeping currents of custom, which circulate in the land and age and day that gave us birth, it underlieth outward influences, and may be obedient, nay, is surely in the most determined men obedient, to those outward influences,

rather than to any self-directing power of our own mind and will, or any authority sweetly exercised over us by our God and Saviour. For which reason we would rather have you to peruse the inner leaves of the book, than this its title-page and advertisement, which are under the common eye. And here, too, I may observe in passing, the evil of that popular notion that we are justified by works; which, if the word *works* included all the acts of life, inward as well as outward, would not be so misleading in doctrine, but being understood wholly of those visible demonstrations of character and conduct, which serve the common eye and the common weal, rather than our own eye and the glory of God, the doctrine hath the effect of making its believers rest satisfied with a certain routine of forms, or list of characters, without ever looking into the workings of the heart, or holding any reckoning of what is done within its various chambers. But if by the word *life*, you will be careful to understand the life of the mind and heart and soul—the life of the inward as well as the outward man—that which passes in the thought as well as that which transpires in word—that which the will obeys as well as that which the act obeys—the workings of the conscience as well as the workings of the bodily members; then to your life I pray you to refer, and of your life to take account, in order to answer that question which I proposed to you, Whether you have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit of promise, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come?

Now, in order that you may see the nature of the spiritual or everlasting life set in just opposition with the nature of the earthly or temporal life, and thereby draw, as in a glass, the image of your own self, I hold it good to take up the subject in the threefold order of the faculties of life—our will, our knowledge, and our performance; which corresponds to the threefold offices of the blessed Trinity, concerning which we have discoursed. For it is to be remembered that the soul of man was created in the image of God at first, and, by the redemption of Christ and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, is regenerated in the same image of righteousness and true holiness.

Now, first, with respect to the will of man, that which originates our actions and purposes, and directs us to the acquisition of knowledge and to the exertion of power, it is found in its natural state in a condition of bondage, not willingly obedient, yet obedient to some form of present good, from which it is not able to extricate itself into the obedience of God and the desire of everlasting good. For to the eye of natural men, the things unseen and eternal are either wholly in the dark, or do but loom indistinctly through a perpetual mist which overhangs them ; and the things which are seen and temporal take such strong colours and press upon us with such present and urgent demands, while the whole course and current of the world bears in towards them, and involves us irredeemably in the midst of them, that the great multitude of us are moved with a combined desire to attain or to recover some of the good and pleasant things, and to occupy some of the ambitious and commanding places with which the world abounds. Hardly one in a thousand, by deep meditation upon his own inward being, discovereth that there is anything better than to eat, drink, and make merry while the day lasts ; and when the night cometh, they enter into its dark and eternal shroud with as little true concern about the future things which lie hid therein as they had during their life. For man is not a creature to be conjured out of his former being by a deathbed sickness ; nor are the spirits of the prince of this world which have ruled him to be cast out by the parting prayer of a priest, or the holy sacrament, or the consecrated wafer, or any such ritual formalities. The Psalmist truly said, "The wicked have no bands in their death," because they die a brutal death, as they have lived a brutal life ; their will, which divideth them from the brutes, having been occupied and engrossed with things which differ not in kind, but only in degree from those things which occupy and engross the brutes. For what is a rich man's or a poor man's table better than the crib from which the nobler animal is fed ? what the luxurious dainties of the epicure, but the wash with which the filthier brutes do gorge themselves ? and what is man's habitation, though a palace, but the lair of the nobler animal ?

and what his dress, though waited on by all the graces, but the shelter or ornament which the lower creatures need not? And what truly are our riches and possessions but the honey which the bee hath distilled, or the store which the ant hath laid up against the winter? And what, moreover, is all the understanding by which these things are discovered, compounded, served up, and accumulated—I mean the harder handicrafts, with the natural and mechanical sciences—but the mere varied instincts of the animal which hath the lordship of the earth? For which ends if a man wish and decree and scheme, then surely his will is in bondage to the earth, and hath wholly lost, or never discovered, that it is spiritual and immortal, and hath nothing to do with the earth save to possess it like a master, and use it as a base instrument of his nobler ends?

But it is altogether otherwise with the will of him whom God hath redeemed from the bondage of the natural world into the liberty of the spiritual world, and which continually desireth and continually presses towards the mark of conformity to the will of God. For, dearly beloved brethren, as I have often taught you, this is our fall, to have a will out of harmony with the will of Him who created us; and this is our recovery, to be brought back again into sweet converse with our Father's will, and the divine order of our Father's house. Wherefore God first revealed His law or will with the gospel in its bosom, as a child promised, but hereafter to be born; signifying thereby that the gospel came in order to bring us back to the obedience of the law, or to the harmony of the will of God. And Christ, when He came to fulfil the promise which had been made unto the fathers, was careful, in the first place, to reconstitute the law in a purer, more spiritual, more enlarged form, according with the more enlarged and gracious form which the gospel was about to receive from His incarnation and death and resurrection, and dispensation of the Holy Ghost. So that he who hath tasted the good word of God hath his will raised to other desires, and stirred up with other concerns, than what he shall eat, and what he shall drink, and wherewithal he shall be clothed, even with the desire of universal consent and continued harmony with the Divine

will, that whether he eat, or whether he drink, or whatever he do, he may do all to the glory of God. And truly to glorify God becometh the chief end of his being, and he no longer careth even to glorify himself; and he holdeth the world's wages as the first-fruits of hell, and the world's friendships as the enemies of God; and now he hath his treasures in heaven, and he glories in the riches of the grace of God in Christ Jesus the Lord. And, whereas he feels continually the opposite forces of a corrupt nature, and an evil world, and infinite temptations leading him away from the main drift of all his desires, and perceiveth that but for the strength which cometh from above he is also unable to stir one foot, or advance one step in the way of God's commandments, or to extricate his spirit in anything from its oppressors, instead of boasting and talking, instead of swaggering with big purposes, and building airy castles of high danger, he walketh in a lowly way, and observeth a humble demeanour, and seeketh his strength from the Lord Jehovah, in whom is everlasting strength, to whom his wish being wholly directed, with an eager longing of union, he boweth himself in prayer, he beseecheth with supplication, he attendeth with reverence, he waiteth with hope, he undertaketh with a divine trust, and in every act of his devising and purposing and performing, hath a constant regard to a divine sustenance, so that the root and spring of his life is divine, his spirit is heavenward, his heart full of divine aspirations, his eye full of divine researches and holy notices, his words full of Christian speeches, and his hand accomplished in gracious and divine acts of love.

This redemption of the will into the high and heavenly participation of the Divine nature, which doth not come to pass without the immediate operation of the Father, whose will, I have taught you, is thankfully to be regarded as the originator of the coming of Christ, and of the work of the Spirit, and of all our hopes of salvation,—whose will is devoutly to be looked to as the spring and source of our desire after Christ, of our faith in Christ, and participation of the Spirit; wherefore prayer is the first state and attitude of the soul, which teaches its way to heaven; and the answer of prayer, which never is truly made but to be answered, is the turning of our

disposition and inclination away from the things of time and sense to the things of eternity and the Spirit;—this redemption of the will into divine liberty, my beloved brethren, being begun, doth beget in us a desire of knowledge in things whereof we have been altogether ignorant and careless in the time past, when our spirit was yet under bondage. And for this knowledge we carry our mind to the word which God hath revealed for our salvation, being well expressed by experience in the melancholy truth, that none of the three kingdoms of nature contain in themselves the information after which our whole soul is now bent with most diligent quest, hungering and thirsting for the knowledge of the mind of God, as the hart doth for the water-brooks in a dry and parched land. And at this point properly commenceth the soul's communion with Christ, who is the revelation of the Godhead, the bearer of heavenly truths presented in an earthen vessel, the Word of God incarnate, and rendered legible to all the sympathies which inhere in the humanity of man. And now begins the work of faith, which, to the spiritual mind, is what the work of the eye and ear and every sense is to the natural mind: for as the natural understanding would be dark and ignorant of the outward world, wherein it is created of God to do its business, without the ministry of the five senses, whereby it noticeth and becometh acquainted with the same; so I reckon that the spiritual mind, though turned to God, must continue dark and unrefined and helpless with respect to Him, and all the spiritual world of which He is the governor, but for the exercise of faith, as our organ of communication with the revelation which He hath given of Himself by His blessed word. Now whereas that Divine revelation is not like the narrative of a traveller concerning things of which we have no knowledge or similitude already in our minds, but is a most various discourse addressed with Divine wisdom and grace to every faculty of the human soul—the sense of justice, the love of truth, its desire of blessedness, its delight in liberty, its desire to see those embodied in a person, its longing after a perfect human being who might love it and whom it might love, who might instruct and help it, and to whom it might yield its revenue and its coinage, addressed to every

other inward principle, sentiment, taste, and affection of the soul ; so I judge that the faith by which we lay hold and embrace this most various record of divine and spiritual things, is not, as they have been doting and dreaming for the last century, like the faith which we yield to a traveller's straightforward tale, or to a witness's declaration of what he has seen and heard, but that it is a faculty in the receiving soul somewhat proper to, and commensurate with, that which is given it to receive ; a hand delicate and comprehensive enough to handle that which is presented to it ; an eye capable of being entertained with the glories of that glorious vision which is presented to it ; a mind capable of apprehending the variety and beauty, and truth and application of that which is submitted to it. And here is the work of faith, to bring the spiritual faculties, benumbed by the torpor of disuse, and overlaid with a farrago of earthly knowledge, into a state of aptness and liberty to apprehend and occupy and use the infinite variety of spiritual matters which are submitted to it in the records of the revelation of the word of God, who is our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification, and redemption, the revealer of the mysteries of heaven and earth, the discloser of the grace and truth which dwell with God from everlasting, unsearchable and unknowable ; the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of His person, in whom were hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, in whom dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Oh that I could speak aright of faith ! Oh that I could redeem it from that paltry conceit into which our wretched evidence-writers have reduced it ! Oh that I could give you Paul's idea of faith, the idea of the fathers, the idea of the Reformers ! Then would I shew that career of the soul's faculties compared with which the highest scientific research is as earth compared with heaven ; for which poetry and philosophy are but, as it were, the sharpening of the tools, and which hath no kindred with any other of the soul's various occupations ; being the ingathering of all her powers, the husbandry of all her exertions, the resurrection of all her might, the enjoyment of all her delights in the study, and meditation, and appropriation, and application of all the divinest things which the Son of God was able to

reveal for the exaltation of the being of man into the heavenly place of the Divine nature. There should be no more debating or disputing about faith and works, if men did but know what faith was, to which outward works are like the lipping shore to the mighty ocean : for as the ocean doth lie with her many arms and bays around the earth, and convey the blessings which are borne upon her breast, or brought forth in her hidden womb, to all the people who people her manifold shores ; so is faith like the great ocean of spiritual thought and feeling, which breedeth infinite good and worketh with mighty motion in itself, and beareth outward a plentiful tide of good and charitable works to all the people and places with which it hath intercourse in the communion and fellowship of human life. Works are but the hem of the garment of faith, which waves abroad to the liberal observation of men ; but the soft and warm substance of the garment, which enwrappeth the tender frame of our own being, and protecteth it from inclement weather and rude wintry blasts, that is faith. Now the will being inclined heavenward, and being supplied with a constant energy from the Father, doth summon into activity all the faculties of the mind to hold communion with the word of God, and these faculties, not of understanding, which affecteth the sensible, but of mind, which affecteth the spiritual, do grow apace by the food on which they feed ; the nectar of heaven, presented in the earthen vessel of human language, doth convey divine activity to the soul, and worketh within it an everlasting vitality of holiness and goodness, and the whole inward man is changed from a crooked thing, dwarfed and bowed down with a grievous load of flesh and worldliness, into a giant of mighty bone, who shouteth as by reason of wine, and rejoiceth to run his unwearied and endless course. Oh that I could speak of the operation of faith upon the most meagre and ill-informed mind ! Say they that learning can make a man's soul pure ? they lie. Say they that high life doth make a man's soul gentle ? they lie. Say they that the natural sciences maketh a man liberal, or that the tongues make him human ? I testify unto you, what I do know and have seen, that there are not more ignoble spirits in the land than in seats of learning, and that the masters of the sciences are

ofttimes mere crawling worms in respect to true life of soul ; and that the ranks called graceful are in general full of selfishness, or of the hypocrisy of wanting it. But, mark you, that a man of faith is a noble man, and a gracious man, and a high-minded man, and a charitable man. Find him in a cottage or in a palace, in an occupation of honour or in an occupation of disgrace, a man he is to give the law to other men, and to sustain the highest men by his spotlessness, and the learnedst by his wisdom. And they have even done exploits, and borne perils, and subdued obstinate resistances, and will do to the end of the world ; for as the jewelled crown is among the ornaments of the head of men, so is faith among the ornaments of the mind of men ; and as a sceptre in the hand of kings is to the staff in the hands of other men, so is faith among the other powers and authorities of the immortal soul—the prince, the potentate, the ruling and presiding genius of the whole.

Which will to convert from its hereditary and headstrong rebellion to an affectionate obedience unto God, which faith to work in the enlarged and all-embracing word of God, and to carry into operation and effect the new bent and inclination of the mind, thus steered, thus charted into new courses, and freighted with new and more precious burdens unto all men and things, is the office of the Holy Spirit ; for, as we have oftentimes taught you, while it appertaineth to the Father alone, out of the deep recesses of His incommunicable will, to originate all things, and to the ever-obedient Word forthwith to reveal all things as they originate there, so it appertaineth to the blessed Spirit to bring that which hath been declared into being, and maintain it thus to the praise and the glory of the Father and the Son, from whom He proceedeth, the last in act, but the equal in dignity, the same in substance, and equal in power and glory. For whoever willeth, however zealously, and undertaketh, however sincerely, to become willing and obedient unto the law, or enraptured and entranced by the gospel of Christ, his will centred in the Father's will, his little light of reason taken up into the light of universal reason, which lighteth angels and men,—whoever thus thinketh to accomplish in his own might, alas ! he shall find himself defeated of his thought, and ere long strewed in wreck,—

the sport and contempt of his most masterful and cruel foes. For why? Because he would move earth to heaven in his own strength, and distil out of it the curse which hath impenetrated all creatures, and remove the cherubim sword which encircleth Eden with unapproachable fire, and navigate the impassable gulf, and restore himself to his lost estate; which it is not in the power of man to accomplish, being a divine work,—divinely executed by the action of the Holy Spirit in every energy of the will to return, in every act of the mind to know the mysteries of revelation, in every act of the power to perform actions becoming godliness. For there is a three-fold life, as we said,—the life of our will, the life of our knowledge, and the life of our power,—which are entwined with one another, making a sort of trinity of man's soul; of which life every part presently inhereth in an earthly and sinful basis, and needeth to be transplanted to a heavenly basis, whereby it becomes eternal life, being for the present only temporal life. Therefore the Holy Spirit is present with us, and helpful to us in every effectual resolution of the will, in every act of appropriating faith, and in every demonstration of outward godliness; and when He is not present there is backsliding and defection. So, then, there is a continual divinity present in our humanity; we are heavenly always, though we be always labouring on the earth, and we look at all times for heavenly help, though we be at all times stirred up with all our proper thoughts, even in the spirit of prayer, in the spirit of faith, and in the spirit of activity, having always the spirit of love and of power and of a sound mind, working out our salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. This is to be redeemed—this is to be saved—this is to be made partakers of life everlasting.

And now, brethren, every one of you may be able for himself to judge whether his life, taken in the proper sense of man's life, which is not the life of an animal consisting in the work he does, but the life of a self-conscious being, consisting in occupations of his soul, and the manifestations of his discourse, still more than in his handiwork,—whether this life, which ever goeth on and never for a moment ceaseth, be truly

heavenly or earthly, spiritual or carnal, divine or worldly. And I pray you to take the matter to heart, and consider it well, and apply to it closely, and not be forced out of it by the obstinacy of your present masters, however pleasant and flattering; but, in the strength of God, to engage and grapple with the question of your true state in the sight of God, forasmuch as ye know that there is a sufficient help to the weakest, and plentiful forgiveness to the wickedest. For why then should you tarry,—for why refuse the calls of your conscience—why harden your hearts this other time—why provoke the Lord again, lest His wrath descend upon you, and He swear in His wrath that ye shall not enter into His rest! The Lord fend from all men such a fearful calamity, as that they should be given up to their idols! Oh, bestir yourselves! awake from sleep! arouse ye from the sleep of death! Why should ye die, my brethren? my beloved brethren, why should ye die? The Lord forbid that any of us should rush headlong upon the bosses of His buckler! The Lord grant us deep concern and strong desire, well-grounded faith and continual obedience to His most holy will, and seal us by His Spirit till the day of redemption!

And here, beloved brethren, and people of my flock, and members of my church, I conclude my ministrations for the present, being about to be separated from you for a short season, that, by the grace of God, I may return strengthened and quickened to this ministry of salvation. I have taken order that in my absence ye shall be ministered to by faithful preachers of the word; to whom I pray you to give ear, and not to wander abroad to gratify itching ears. Let not the desire of novelty carry you away from these courts where you have been wont to worship; but come up hither, if it were possible, with more diligence, and listen with the same grave attention, that ye may testify to the world that it is not me but the gospel of Christ on my lips which you regard; that it is not the entertainment of your mind, or the gratification of your taste, but the profit of your souls, and the glory of God, which ye consult in the worship of His holy sanctuary. These things regard. Lay up the doctrine which I have taught you. Search the Scriptures whether these things be so, and

the Lord give you understanding in all things. And now, the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever! Amen.

## XXXV.

### CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE.

CHRISTIAN discipline includeth not only all that man owes to man, and brother to natural brother, but all, moreover, which one son of God owes to another son of God, and one member of Christ to another member of Christ,—the whole scope and range, indeed, of Christian love, from washing a disciple's feet to the laying down of our lives for the brethren. It beareth to Christian love the same relation which law beareth to justice, the one being the spirit, the other the outward form and expression of the spirit. Christian discipline being, therefore, understood to signify all that is included in the duty of one disciple unto another, we intend in this discourse to open a little the source of discipline, the nourishment by which it grows, and the strength in which it standeth ; for if this can be discovered, the Church will do its best offices for discipline when it nourisheth this the principle of its life.

The seed and germ of discipline, and its nourishment through all the stages of its life, is no other than sound doctrine, and without the constant presence and power of sound doctrine discipline cannot long endure in its genial and blessed spirit, but falls away, and declines into formality, and, in a state of ignorance and superstition, hardens into tyranny. For discipline is but the outward form of Christian love, and Christian love which is in the heart can only be generated by the knowledge of that truth which Christ taught His disciples. The faith of sound doctrine is that which makes the selfishness of the natural man open into the community of the Christian, which melts the heart of stone into the heart of flesh, and unfoldeth all the generous sympathies of the spirit,

teaching it to feel kindness and to do good, and to part with one happy condition for the sake of another's well-being, upon the same disinterested principle which moved Christ, though rich, for our sakes to become poor, that we through His poverty might become rich, and to give His life a ransom for the sins of men. Till the entering in of faith there is nothing present in the heart but nature, out of which cometh the fruits of nature, which are pride, impiety, self-idolatry, ostentation, malice, and such like; but upon the entering in of faith, there entereth along with it into the heart the light of divine knowledge, which converteth it from its idolatries to the service of the living and true God, and from the love of self to the love of its neighbour as itself, and to the love of the brethren as Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it. But there is no such spirit of Christian love in a man until he loveth the sound doctrines whereby we are redeemed out of the vain conversation of the world, and renewed in the image of God; not only loveth them, but liveth in them as the element of his breath, liveth on them as the elements of his life. And if sound doctrine be necessary to beget the spirit of Christian love, then is it necessary to produce Christian discipline, which is the outward form and visible fruit of Christian love. And thus the allegory of our Lord, in the 15th of John, is completed: He is the vine, and we are the branches; and if we bear much fruit we are His disciples. That is, He, or His words, are that out of which we grow, as the branch out of the stem of the vine; and while we abide in this, as the branch doth abide in the vine, we bear much fruit, and those fruits are what distinguish His disciples, that is, are the discipline.

But of all the doctrines of Scripture, that which is most conducive to the growth of discipline, and in which indeed the Church standeth as a community distinct from every other community, is the doctrine of election, not as it is contemplated by most theologians, under the form of an eternal decree, but as it is contemplated in the Scriptures, under the form of a fact. The doctrine of election under the form of a decree is a doctrine into the belief of which men grow according as they grow spiritual; but which being believed—

or being imagined as believed, for believed it cannot be—by any man of himself from the first, would go far to arrest and altogether put an end to his spiritual progress. And therefore to endeavour to enforce the faith of it upon men is an idle and, I think, an unprofitable work. Its evidence is not had through demonstration to the intellect, but through experience of the grace of God, through manifestation of the Divine Spirit within us, through the attainment of Christian graces, through the progress of our redemption from the midst of the world's evil conditions, and the assurance that we are coming into a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. If therefore you would persuade a man of the truth of the doctrine of election as a decree and purpose of God regarding himself, the way by which to proceed is to say nothing of it whatever, but to lead him onward into the ways of godliness and the experience of the divine life; and when you have got him far into the bowels of the land, then from some eminence of faith and holiness make him to face about and look back upon the territory of the King which he hath been brought over by the ministry of the King's good Servant, and by the constant guidance of the King's only-begotten Son. Then let him doubt, if he please, of his being one of the King's chosen ones. But if he still doubt, the only remedy is to proceed further and still further onward, till you reach a more inward region, a more intimate neighbourhood to the King's privileged places, and stand further within the arch of the royal immunities. By such a progress from faith to faith and from grace to grace the most faithless and dispirited will grow into the belief of election, as a decree and purpose of God regarding himself. But if, while yet beyond the King's territory, in the hostile land, or hardly within the barriers of salvation, while staggering and reeling upon the border line and debateable land, you would seek to persuade a man of his being one of the King's most choice and beloved and most faithful servants, he must be a fool if you succeed, and you do him wrong to make the attempt: for if you succeed, you delude him and stop his progress; if you fail, you prejudice him against the sovereign whose favour is had at so cheap a rate. Therefore, I say it again, the doctrine of election under

the form of a decree must be left to grow upon us, or rather we grow into it, just as we grow into the knowledge and experience of divine things within our soul.

But not so of the doctrine of election conceived under the form of a fact, or, as it might be called, the doctrine that the people of God are separate and distinct from others. This is the doctrine which must ever be held up before a Christian church—that in all things they are diverse from the world, separated from the world by lines and barriers, not of place nor language nor dress nor outward visible forms, but by lines and barriers of the Spirit, by new principles of action and new ends of action, by new desires of well-being and purposes of well-doing, by a new faith, a new holiness, and a new truthfulness. But it is separation without being distance, it is division without being discord; for though the Christian be diverse from one who is not a Christian, and from himself while yet in an unchristian state, so much as to be called a new man, still he is divided from none of his former affections, except in so far as they were malicious and evil. He is a more united husband; his friendship is tenfold more true; his enmities are shewn in forgiveness; his indignation is under the helm of love, and the divisive selfishness of humanity is ejected, and the conjoining love of Christ is bestowed in its stead. His relations to all men are now joined by different ties than heretofore, and his distinctiveness consisteth in the diversity of these ties, not in the weakness of them. If God be more merciful, more generous and bountiful than man, while at the same time He is separate from all unrighteousness, and wickedness standeth not in His sight, and iniquity as ashamed doth hide her face; then is a child of God more merciful, more generous and bountiful than a child of mere humanity, though he also doth his utmost to be holy as God is holy, and pure as He is pure. I would not asperse ill-starred and evil-conditioned humanity while I am explaining the true nature of that separation and election upon which Christian discipline resteth as its pillar. I would not libel that condition of nature in which I once stood as self-glorious as any, though as entirely lorded over by sin and selfishness as any, while I endeavour to shew unto my fellows that there is yet a better

strength wherein to stand, a higher nobility wherein to rejoice, a surer peace whereon to repose the weary heart, a more tender friendship, a holier love, a more entire and unbroken communion, a redemption, a liberty, and a life of which the world doth not even dream in all its restless research after its own contentment and well-being. Yet convinced I am, having had the proof and experience of no cold, secret, or reserved, but rather of what the world were wont to call a warm, open, and generous nature within myself,—convinced, I say, I am, from many years' knowledge of myself, and some short knowledge of another self than that self which was born of my mother, of this, that till the doctrines of the gospel penetrate the heart it is closed and contracted towards God and towards the things which are of God, towards man and the things that are of man. I do not say that it is altogether contracted; nay, there is a humanity in man, and the humanity of one man draweth to the humanity of another man; but Christian discipline consisteth not in the converting of our humanity, but in the converting of the divinity within us, which is not quickened by natural instinct, but which is born again of water and of the Spirit, and nourished by the grace of God. And when this divinity cometh to be born within the soul, nature is not quenched, her milky juice and sap is not dried up, her fire of love is not put out, nor is her humanity contracted towards the humanity of another, nor her being shrivelled up; nay, every expansion of the soul is twice expanded, and every wrinkle of selfishness is unfolded, the bud of human nature is full blown under the new heart and life of affection which breathes upon it from the Spirit of God, and new unfoldings that heretofore were knit up in the secret parts of the soul open themselves. And what shall I say, but that love in a state of nature is to love in a state of grace as the mustard seed mentioned in Scripture, which is the least of all seeds, is to the mustard tree, in the branches of which the birds of the air do nestle, and under the boughs of which the beasts of the field do congregate for shelter? Yea, verily, of a truth the birds of the air have a tender place in the bosom of a renewed man, and to the beasts of the field the boughs of his tender mercies are extended. And if the

bird which wingeth its flight in the regions of the air from one unknown place to another place unknown, have in the soft bosom of the renewed man a tender regard ; and if he would not tread with his foot upon the unsightly worm which crawleth in its slimy bed, or, save in self-defence and for necessary sustenance, would harm the beast which roareth in the forest ; what must be his warmth of love towards his brethren of mankind, upon whose countenance God hath written brotherhood in every line, and upon whose heart He hath engraven brotherhood in every natural feeling ? But, above all, what must be his closeness and intimacy, his mysterious communion and unity of nature with the redeemed people of God, who are joint-members with Him in the body of Christ, and inspired with the common Spirit of truth and holiness, which descendeth in the form and with the affection of a dove upon them all ?

This is the form of that doctrine of election or separation, which being insisted upon will give birth to discipline, which being shunned or slighted will abolish it from the Church. For if the people be not taught the principles of their faith, which distinguisheth them as a people ; if they be allowed to soil their raiment with earthly and sensual contacts, and to corrupt their spirit with ambitious or ostentatious or worldly inspirations, and be not constantly guarded from these as the poisons of their new life, and the old bondage from which they were redeemed ; if they be not reminded that they are a distinct people, a people distinct in all their principles, and ends, and motives, and distinguished for the purpose of shewing unto the world the attributes of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light, in order that the world beholding their good works may glorify their Father which is in heaven ;—if this idea be lost, or seldom treated of, then it must inevitably come to pass that communion within the Church will be like society in the world ; that the name of brethren may remain, but the meaning of it is lost ; that the name of church, or *ἐκκλησία*, or election, may abide, but that it hath become an election without any reason of preference, an elected body whose election serveth no good end of the common weal, or to their own

private and peculiar blessing. In truth the Church may become a set of doctrines, as it is here; or a set of forms, as it is in Romish places; or a set of respectable moralities, as it is in Socinian places—it may become anything or nothing, but never will it become the unblemished bride of Christ, His betrothed spouse, whom He shall yet lead in His hand and offer to His Father in her glorious beauty, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Oh, what I would give to hear this doctrine of election, which hath become the watchword of every hare-brained spiritual Quixote, become again what it was in the hands of our fathers—the holy name which signified in one word the Church's harmony within herself, and mercy towards them without! Then would she become again like a cottage in the wilderness for the wayworn traveller to lay down his weary limbs and be refreshed; she would become as streams of water in dry places, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. I pray the Lord to bring His people back from their vain disputations and profitless janglings about this word, and to abolish the ideas grafted on it by intellectual disputants, and to bring them at length to discern that it is but the name for all that which separates and distinguishes the new man from the old man, the disciple of Christ from the disciple of Belial, the image of God renewed in the soul in righteousness and true holiness, from the image of Satan, his pride, his malice, his lust, whereto we are born by natural birth.

But to return to our purpose. When this doctrine ceaseth to be kept up before the Church, from that moment church discipline declineth. For church discipline is nothing but the expression of that separate state. Inasmuch as it is more faithful and true than worldly societies, more constant and persevering in well-doing, more patient and forbearing under evil treatment, it oweth the difference to the feelings which the brethren have of their being called out of the world to be in it as Goshen in Egypt, or the holy tabernacle in the waste. And if this feeling of their distinctness decay, then will their discipline fall away into worldly ceremony and fashion. As it strengthens, all the energy of love which expresseth it will heighten. And if this idea of separation, while it is intense in action, be not

expanded in breadth, then there is a corresponding narrowness in church discipline, which is to be seen manifested in this very city, where the separation is made to consist, not in conjoining the universal relations of life upon higher and better principles, but in division from certain persons, places, and subjects of discourse, wherein hath arisen that spirit of religious coteriership whereof we have often pointed out the blameworthiness. But when the main drift of the doctrine which is ministered to any church is to shew the distinctiveness of a Christian from a worldly man in all his bearings and relations, in all his sayings and doings, and in its expression it feareth not the scriptural terms of "elect," "separate and peculiar people," "chosen people of God," "sons of God," and "disciples of Christ;"—when there is the constant use of the Scripture phraseology and the literal exposition of the meaning with which these phrases are pregnant, it will follow as a necessary consequence, that amongst those from whom the doctrine findeth a welcome, discipline, which is the discharge to one another of that new and separate spirit, will keep growing apace, and with it will grow all the bonds of love, and all the works of charity, and all the patience of hope, all the sympathy and communion which pertaineth to the disciple of Christ.

Now, of the three forms under which doctrine is held up to the people, the Socinian, the Arminian, and the Calvinistic, —though instead of that word I would prefer the doctrine of the Reformers,—the latter is the only form which is familiar with this doctrine of election or separation upon which discipline hingeth. The Calvinists do oft abuse that doctrine, as hath been said; but they are always presenting it under some one form or other. The Arminians forego it for the simple proclamation of the free grace of the gospel, dwelling rather upon the welcome, and the advantage of accepting it, upon the folly and destruction of rejecting it, than upon the consequences of having accepted it, the new life which it quickens within the soul, and the new life which it begets outwardly towards all men, and the fellowship and communion of speech or discipline which it engendereth towards the brethren. The Socinians, again, not only are silent upon this, but upon every

other peculiar doctrine of our faith, and diligently avoid the use of all those terms and phrases by which the peculiarity of the Church is set forth, or explain them away as relics of the old Jewish dispensation, and savouring of its bondage; and instead they reason, and idolise reason, and discourse of the beauty of virtue, and the amiableness of God, and universal benevolence and truth, in language more proper to a classical dispensation of which Cicero was the text-book, than to a gospel dispensation taught by the Lord from heaven.

Whence it ariseth that the only churches in which discipline or separation hath any existence, are the Calvinistic Churches, or our Church in particular, and those Seceding and Dissenting bodies which have adopted her standards of doctrine. But in the Church here established, where Arminianism hath, by a strange revolution, come for the last century and a half to prevail, you have no discipline, and will have none, except the discipline of force and power, until the doctrines of Cranmer and Ridley, and Latimer and Hooker, and the manner of shewing them forth in discourse, revive again. And whenever it hath revived, as generally amongst the Evangelical people it hath, you have a discipline amongst themselves, a certain notion of separateness and practice of inward communion in their homes and companies, as a substitute for that which law hindereth them from establishing in the outward visible Church. But as for the Socinians, their communion, so far as I can gather it, pretends to no distinctiveness more than would be required amongst well-bred civil men, or in good society, as it is called. It is the religion of respectable people, and whoever is respectable, is not only admissible, but understandeth himself to be as far advanced as he had need to be.

Therefore, men and brethren, it is most manifest wherein my duty as your minister, your duty as a flock of Christ, consisteth. My duty as your minister is to set before you the true doctrine, which being received in the faith, and held in the love of it, may, by the good blessing of God, confirm in you whatever hath been already wrought within your souls congenial with the image of God, and may redeem those parts of your soul which are still held in the thralldom of sin and of the world, in order that you may rejoice more and more in

the liberty with which Christ maketh His people free. And, while I am thus ministering unto you the word of life, and shewing you the goodliness of the land flowing with milk and honey, the green pastures and living waters whereunto the great Shepherd and Bishop of your souls hath introduced you, I shall be doing the best office for those who have no home, nor habitation, nor resting-place for their weary feet. For in order to persuade an outcast son to return unto his Father's home, or a wandering exile to return to his native land, it is much better to treat with him of the peace and plenty, of the happiness and affection, of the religion and liberty which reigneth everywhere ; of the royal immunities which have been bestowed upon the people, and the acts of amnesty which have been passed ; and of the thousands who like him were helpless, hopeless wanderers, who have come in and tasted that the Lord was good ;—this, I say, is wiser discourse, and better heartening far to the distressed wanderer, than it would be to hold a severe scrutiny of all his faults, and set them in array against their corresponding virtues, and thunder in his ear the sad consequences of his offence, and the perilous footing in which his soul resteth for time and eternity. Therefore, I hold that while I present to the Church the all-righteousness and all-blessedness of Christ, I preach more effectually to those out of the Church, than if I laid before them fine didactic discourses upon righteousness, and painted the beauty of virtue in more glowing colours than the finest poet. The one is an admonition, which cometh silently, and stealeth gently over the soul ; the other is a constant rebuke and upbraiding, which hardeneth it in its pride. The one is an address to all its desires of peace and blessedness, the more prevailing, because it is indirect ; the other, at the best, is but an address to its conscience of truth, whose voice it hath learned to despise, and from the weakness of which arose its present evil condition. Therefore, I would revive that conscience of truth to new activity, add to it the attractiveness of new hopes and desires, by presenting it with the very realities of that peace and blessedness after the false forms of which it hath gone astray, and is likely to be lost. And in preaching to the Church their community of blessings, I shall preach to the

world most persuasively the gospel of the salvation of Christ.

And your duty, my beloved people and brethren in Christ, is to add to the demonstration of words the more powerful demonstration of deeds, by so living with one another in an inward trust and true loving-kindness as to encourage the grace of God among yourselves, and make it manifest unto those without, that if they wish quarrels to cease, and anxious corroding cares to die, and inquietude to have an end, and passion to abate its whirling commotion, and affection to be constant and true, and selfishness to open its folded breast, and pride to lay down his pale and withered crown, and ostentation to cast away her falsehood, and truth to bear up the body of a character which every grace hath adorned,—then their only resource is to take refuge in the bosom of the Church, which hath put away envy, and malice, and evil-speaking, and are living like new-born babes upon the sincere milk of the word, and growing thereby to the stature of perfect men in Christ. But if ye have bitter quarrellings amongst yourselves, or give in to the gaities of the world; if ye love the jokes and foolish jestings, wherein the discourse of natural men doth reveal its untruth, and under the veil of which nature hideth a little her hateful form; if ye envy and grudge at your neighbours' good, or revile your superiors, and speak evil of dignities, or cruelly and harshly intreat your inferiors, then ye are a dishonour to the Church of Christ, and bring no profit to the world, who see in you no beauty to draw their eye, or no consolation whereon to repose their weary head.

Therefore, beloved brethren, come unto Christ in faith, and with faith receive His holy doctrines, and by prayer seek to have Christ formed in you the hope of glory. Be watchful at all times that you say nothing in the spirit of former selfishness, and say nothing out of vain-glory; but that you do all things in love, and speak all things of truth. Be the separate people whereof I have discoursed unto you; and let that separation be shewn, not in bigotry, but in liberality, that is, Christian liberality—the enlargement of the heart towards everything that liveth, and the communion of the heart with every man, according as he approacheth to the

likeness of Christ. Do this—add to your faith, virtue ; to virtue, patience ; to patience, temperance ; to temperance, brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness, charity ;—do this, and you shall never fail to produce, within the bosom of this church, that love and unity for the which the Church was established upon the earth, and ye shall add weight and demonstration to my discourses, and powerfully convince the gainsayers, and put the evil-speaking of the wicked to shame, and then shall be added unto us daily of those which shall be saved, and we shall grow together in the grace of the gospel ; until at length, when our strength faileth with the infirmity of years, and the elders of this church have dropped into their graves, and the brethren which now are numbered of us are sleeping in the dust, another pastor, more faithful, will be raised up of the Lord, and another eldership, and another brotherhood ; and so will this church, which now is coming into being, while she abideth in the truth and preserveth her first love, be preserved by her great and living Head from generation to generation, yea, unto all generations for ever. Amen.

## XXXVI.

### THE THEOLOGY OF THE NATURAL MAN.

**T**HE philosophical religion which at this day prevails—if any religion can be said to prevail among our lettered people—is derived from observations made upon the works of creation, in which they discover marks of design, and final ends of goodness and bounty. The richness, and beauty, and fertility of nature through all her chambers, the diffusion of lusty happy life in every creature beneath the sun, and the wonderful means for preserving, defending, and continuing the golden line of being ; the various revolutions and decompositions of bodies, and their reverting back again, through circles of useful change, into their primitive forms;—this good husbandry of all the elements of creation ; this wise composition of them, and as wise revolution of them, together with the signs of happiness and health which every sensitive creature exhibits;—all this begets in the man of knowledge and taste a high idea of the power and goodness diffused through the whole. But the knowledge of these various changes and useful properties of things may or may not terminate in the idea of one God. And it doth not necessarily follow that a scientific observer of the works of nature shall be a believer in one great First Cause and one great Director of all. On the other hand, I have often seen the more knowledge of nature the less knowledge of God, until at length a practical atheism or a deification of nature was the result. Instead of a living God, the soul of the world, a power diffused over nature ; instead of a God at all times omnipotent, an abstraction of physical power ; instead of a God at all times wise and active, a generalisation of all philosophical laws ; instead of the holy Father of all intelligence, the ultimate root from which sprung and

by which were sustained all those branches of nature with which they were conversant. And if I were myself to play the philosopher, I would say that this pantheism or soul of matter is the only accurate inference from their premises. When you have collected a number of properties in things, such, for example, as Paley hath done in his "*Natural Theology*," what can you infer more than this, that there is a separate wisdom in these things? But how you infer that this wisdom is one, or that, being one, it is resident in a moral living agent, I confess myself unable to perceive. It is a plastic something everywhere diffused; but that there are the volitions of an intelligent will, living and self-determining, and capable of arresting all, changing all, annihilating all, I see not by what process of sound reasoning they can prove. And, in point of fact, few of them practically arrive at this conclusion, but, on the contrary, whatever notions of God's actual existence, rule, goodness, and other moral attributes, they have been taught by their mother or their preceptor out of the oracles of God, they gradually throw aside, as they advance in the knowledge of nature, as childish and nursery fables, until they learn by degrees the perception and feeling of God as a moving, living, approving, and disapproving being, and pass into the apprehension of Him as a collection of physical causes, at best a cunning workman, of whose works we may know something, of whose design in His works we may apprehend a little, but of whose nature or designs beyond these, of whose affections towards us, or ultimate design respecting us, we can apprehend nothing at all. And this, I take it, without any misrepresentation, is the loose idea of God which now prevails among the scientific of this country, which they have drawn from the mechanical philosophers of France; most assuredly not from the philosophers of Newton's school, the founders of experimental philosophy in the world, whose notions were altogether opposite, as Newton hath well manifested in the conclusion of his great work.

This also is the spirit of much of the poetry of the present day, in which, if you have not the heathen mythology, you are sure to have in its stead an adoration of nature under the name of God, or of a God inherent in nature, and dwelling on

nature's outward face, whose changes they sing of as the changing God: "These, as they change, are but the varied God." It is the nature of the poet's vocation to inspire every thing with the breath and soul of life, and now that he cannot give dryads to the woods, and nymphs to the rivers, and deities to the winds, and sovereign gods to the various elements, without passing the limits of the vulgar knowledge, he is fain to inspire them with a portion of the Divinity; and so it happens that they seem very devout, when, in truth, they are only making the phases and changes of nature into the aspects and acts of God, doing homage to the creature instead of the Creator, and so obscuring and eclipsing and making obsolete the moral attributes which compose the high invisible nature of God, and which alone, as we shall shew, operates upon the soul of man. Such poets do thus bring into a popular form and make attractive those notions which the men of science generally entertain, and help forward this idle and ineffectual gossip or prattle (it riseth no higher) about the nature of God. Then your critics and under labourers in literature do ape their betters, steal their follies, and talk as if they knew about religion, and were competent to handle the counsels of our God; whereas it is the philosopher's, not the Christian's God whom they make these words and indite these little thoughts about. And children in the nursery, fresh from the Christian lessons of their mother, were better judges than such of the reverence which is due and the reverence which is paid to the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

To make the matter plain by a practical instance. Suppose you were taken into the workshop of a cunning workman, say, a maker of machines: suppose there to be in his shop all the variety which you shall find in the model-room of the Society of Arts. You see nothing of the man himself; you know nothing of him, and you hear nothing of him, except what you gather from perusing the works of his hands. You do peruse and understand them; their exquisite workmanship, their perfect adaptation to their ends, their elegance, their variety, and the various offices of life which they subserve. Having finished your survey, you are asked what you think

of the man who made them. You answer, "His ingenuity, his skill, the variety of his knowledge, amazes me ; his invention, his execution, his inexhaustible resources are perfectly astonishing ; he is surely of the highest genius and the finest art." But you are asked further, "Do you love him? Do you revere his goodness? Do you stand in awe of his justice? Would you trust his word? Would you give him your confidence? Would you admire him as a father, as a friend, as a benefactor, as a man, as much as you admire him as a workman?" You answer, "These are altogether different questions, which I have no means of answering till I know him and try him in these various relations. The man may be a drunkard, dishonest, immoral, and worthless in every respect, though his art and knowledge of art be so wonderfully extensive. I have no confidence or communion with him at present, save by his skill and execution. But when I know him in these several relations, I shall then be able to answer you." Now what difference is there between this case and the case of your scientific observers of creation, and poetical describers of the same, and critical disseminators who are, as it were, the carriers and retailers to the others,—the men, I mean, who affect ignorance and carelessness about vital religion, and take a kind of credit for the bravery of such an affectation, but talk loudly of the majesty and might of the God of nature, and with a high tone pass judgment upon Christians of whom they are as ignorant as the child unborn? They are no further advanced than, if I may so speak, into the workshop of God. They behold His various creations performing their various functions, and they are competent to the question of His power and His wisdom ; they can rise into the knowledge of His Godhead, as St Paul says in the 1st chapter of the Romans—"The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." But beyond the apprehension of His power, as it is variously displayed, they cannot rise. They cannot trust in His friendship to them, or His favour for them. They cannot tell what things He approveth and what He disapproveth. They cannot feel towards Him the sentiments of the heart and soul, because they know not His feelings to-

wards them. They can hold a communion of intellect with His works; but with Himself, with His living self, they can have no sentiments kindred to those which bind the relationships of human life,—no filial reverence, no loyal subordination, no tender love, no confident trust, no fear, no hope, no religion.

No wonder, therefore, that those classes who have thus come by what they call their religion, and stand thus related to God only by these remote and shadowy apprehensions, and have truly in their hearts no feelings towards Him, whatever knowledge they may have in their heads;—no wonder that these classes, whose theology I am now endeavouring to present to you in its native barrenness, that you may know to be upon your guard against their affected offence at our Christian liberty, do very seldom if ever refer these various evidences of the Creator's power, with which they affect to be impressed, to one living intelligent being. They are content with them in their scattered variety; they keep them diffused abroad, and feign a devout regard upon beholding the wonderful or beautiful object, as if it were a limb, or presence, or function of the Divinity. They make no transference of the visible wonder to the great invisible Wonderful; no transference of the visible bounty to the All-bountiful. They adore it as it lies before them, they sing of it, they speak of it as if it were a superior existence, and not a piece of inanimate matter, held in being, wrought upon, and beautified by the good pleasure of the everlasting God. So that their God is nothing but a collection of qualities or properties. He hath no existence in their imagination or their heart, but only in their knowledge and their sense, and hath no effect upon their minds further than the properties of creation which they see and know. That is, they have no God. They pay their reverence to creation, but not to a Creator; and if they may be said to have any religion, it is altogether materialism or the poetry of materialism.

If, instead of allowing these properties of the material universe to be abroad, dispersed, and disjoined, they referred them to one invisible agent, the Creator and Conductor of all, then indeed they might gradually come by the notion of

an intelligent and a powerful God, of whom their mind might stand in awe, even when they beheld no images of His presence. For He would not only be the representative of so many properties and works as they beheld, but He would be the representative of power and wisdom in the absolute,—self-existent and self-determining. And they might stand in awe of Him as capable of putting forth that power in ways undisplayed before them, and at times and seasons to them unknown. Such a conception of God as a living, intelligent workman of all we behold, and of ourselves, could not fail to induce upon the mind a habitual regard of some kind, and they might then lay claim to a sentiment of religion. But as it is commonly with these people, their notion of God hath no effect at all ; it is merely a generalisation of science, the law that expresses all creation and all change,—a regulated thing which keeps things in their courses, itself as much defined and regulated as that which it defines,—the Fate of the ancients, or the Nature of the moderns. Of which melancholy fact all their language indicates the certainty. They talk of the works of nature, the laws of nature, the phenomena of nature ; and if haply they allude to anything above or beyond nature, it is by the name of the Author of nature.

Now, supposing them to have made this step from the visible creation to an intelligent Creator, and that they did habitually, upon beholding nature, connect her forms and changes with a superior Being, they are still remote from any apprehension of the Christian's God, and incapable of those affections which we feel towards the God who is revealed in the Holy Scriptures. They have evidences of immeasurable power ; but power doth not beget love, otherwise absolute kings and conquerors of the earth would be the objects of love, whereas they are the objects of dread, and create around them only timorous, crouching slaves. And so it is that whoever fastens upon God's attribute of sovereignty or power, and placeth that chiefly before his eyes, becomes a timorous devotee, a superstitious, feeble slave. So that the philosopher who knows only His power, were at every step ready to prostrate his spirit through fear, did he not defend himself with the idea mentioned above, that this powerful

Being is somehow limited by the rules of nature, or subject to fate, as the ancients more honestly expressed it. They are not delivered from this dilemma of either constantly dreading or constantly limiting their God, by the perception of His wonderful wisdom and deep design in all things which He doth. For this wisdom is only another kind of power, rendering Him who possesseth it doubly armed, and removing Him still further from that neighbourhood within which our affections remain. If, indeed, they could make out His goodness and tender mercy, His grace and long-suffering, His love and forgiveness, and other attributes visible in the revealed and incarnate Word,—if they could read them upon the face of this fallen and suffering world, or discern them in this mixed and miserable constitution of human nature, then will I allow that their philosophical tuition might serve them for a religion, and bring them into some congeniality with Christian feeling. But, as it is, they stand remote from everything that can awaken towards God the pulsations of gladness and affection within the heart of man. For power begetteth only dread, as men all feel in the presence of powerful agents, as arbitrary kings, wily politicians, amongst men ; as the cataract, the tornado, or the tempestuous ocean, in natural things. And wisdom far surpassing our own, begetteth caution, unless we know that it is used only for good ends, which the distressed condition of the world doth not assure us of. And to work affection towards God, nothing availeth save the knowledge of His affection ; to beget trust, nothing availeth but His proved honesty ; and to engender hope, nothing but His promises made and faithfully performed and to ensure complete devotion to His will, nothing prevaileth over our natural selfishness save the combination in one Being of wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, love, and truth.

Now, while men rest in this general, vague apprehension of the Divinity, cloudy, dim, and obscure, the influence of their faith in Him is nothing whatever. He is retired, He dwelleth unknown, nature pursueth her steady course, generation succeedeth generation, and since the fathers fell asleep all things have continued as they were. God passeth into

oblivion. Nature supplanteth Him. Our souls are escaped from His influence, and His blessing cometh not over them. And we are at the mercy of accident and change, even as if we knew not God. And accordingly you shall find these philosophical believers, who are full of affectation for the honour of the Godhead, and marvel at the fanatical freedom and cant of Methodists, and float away in idle speculations upon the majesty and might of the Eternal, how in every instance they will take His name in vain, indulge their thoughts in every range of malice and wickedness, and break every commandment without remorse. They are a sort of sentimentalists in religion. Words are the coin in which they pay the requirements of God,—censorious words upon those who live in familiarity of speech with the Most High, and complimentary speeches to their own cold-hearted reserve and distance, which they would have to pass current for signs of their high regard. Such religion is utterly worthless. It is valued neither in heaven above nor in the earth below. In heaven all is heart and affection, and such dry salutations of the intellect have no currency. On earth they have no use, being compatible with the violation of every moral and religious duty. Yet these people take airs and affect importance, and would not for the world have themselves likened to any low, vulgar religionist. Wretched men! they do but deceive their own souls, and harden them against repentance. For till they curtail the distance at which they stand, till they break down the barriers of formality which they have established betwixt themselves and God, and know Him in the familiar relations of Father, and Friend, and Saviour, as well as those of Creator and Ruler, they shall make no progress in the way that leadeth unto life eternal.

Now, brethren, after these elucidations of our literary and scientific religion, you will perceive a more preposterous thing cannot be than that these profane classes of the people should sit in judgment upon our way of holding intercourse with God, which we cannot regulate so as to please their flimsy ideas and ignorance-bound feelings, without abandoning everything more tender, more intimate, more comforting,

more endearing, which we have learned from the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We must cease to feel as His redeemed people ; we must cease to take the privilege of His adopted sons ; we must fall from being heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, the converted ones of His Holy Spirit, and partakers of His own divine nature. All this, wherein lieth the heart and soul, and strength and life, of our devotion, we must forego, if we would not be thought irreverent and blasphemous by those most ignorant and most affected talkers about the great Author of nature and the God of the universe.

But the truth is, we Christians, who know the only living and true God, and who love Him as the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, owe no respect whatever to those worshippers of the unknown God, and ought to take our scriptural liberty of delighting in one God and one King. All the language which the prophets, and the psalmists, and the evangelists, and the apostles, have used, we are not only authorised, but obligated to use—not as mere language, but as the expression of true-hearted feeling. We should use the language of affection according as we grow in affection ; and this language, which we can use consistently with our affection, should be the evidence to ourselves and to others of our growth in the love of God our Saviour. And to be accused by these uncircumcised classes of taking liberties with God, will be found more frequently a verdict in favour of our Christian humility than a verdict against us.

For either God doth not wish, as He hath commanded, that we should love Him with all our soul, and heart, and strength, and might ; or if He do wish His first and great commandment to be kept, we bechove to know Him with our feelings and affections, and be united to Him by every sentiment which the heart is capable of relishing. We must know Him by those parts of our nature by which we know a parent, and by those by which we know a friend, and by those by which we know a benefactor, and by those by which we know a wise and upright judge, and, in short, by every part of our nature which allies us with the honourable, the amiable, and the good ; and if of these various affections we have paid to Him the homage, surely we are not to be hindered from speaking

to Him in the style which generally expresseth the same. We are not to be denied utterance for what we feel. We are not to be bound in silence towards our God, or to play the hypocrite, and express less than what we honestly and sincerely feel.

Nay, moreover, we are not only to go the length of expressing familiarly, yet truly, the influence of divine affection upon our hearts, but being joined to God by a holy union and an everlasting covenant, we are in a manner called upon to adopt His feeling towards others, and to fill our mouths with the same exhortations against wickedness, the same threatenings against pride and impenitence, the same denunciations against His open enemies and false-hearted friends. And he who minceth the matter with any class of men, or incessantly glozeth the ear with soft words of love and mercy, representeth most imperfectly the feelings of God towards men, and, by harping on one strain of the many-toned gospel, doth take away the power and compass of its melody. Why stand there upon record such fulminations against transgressors, such doleful woes upon sin-laden nations, such discoveries of the shrouded hypocrite, and such anatomisings of life's vain and pompous forms as the Scripture contains from the mouths of prophets, evangelists, and apostles? Were the people they spoke to of a harder mood, requiring more strenuous excitation? Surely not. There never was a people of such strong and manly minds as the people of this country, and who needed so much every kind of demonstration which the Lord hath permitted. And by what right, then, I ask, is any part of Scripture sealed and silent? and for whose sake do its manifold strains not circulate freely through the land?

But these same lettered classes, whose flimsy theology I have exposed, cannot abide such rude and ruthless dealing. Their God coming not near the quarters in which their feelings and interests dwell, but being kept remote in shadowy fancies, they understand not why the minister of God should visit the peaceful slumbers of men with such molestation.

Oh, there be men whose ears grow chaste and delicate exactly in proportion as their hearts and lives grow corrupt. They pay society by silence of the lips for all the evils they

inflict upon her by their deeds ; and affecting the nicest and chastest modesty, they watch every word that hinteth the practices which they are daily guilty of. Which is very well for those who would save, by public appearances, some shreds of a bankrupt character. It may not be agreeable to them to hear suggested or rebuked what they hardily affront God's laws by committing. But, in the name of pure discipline and of virtue, do they mean that we are to allow these things, under which society grieves at the heart, to pass free, uncensured, uncondemned ? Are we to be restrained from setting the virtuous on their guard, because the ears of the vicious have become sick of affectation ? And is the rough, honest voice of truth to be minced down to ears polite, and the pulpit to become a place for negotiating with public taste what must be spoken, and what must not be spoken, of the counsel of God ? Do you think our Gentile apostle, all accomplished in delicacy and civility, would have set down upon his page those offensive characteristics of the world and the wicked heart of men, with exclusion from heaven over against them, unless he had known the necessity, and experienced the use, and intended the continuance of such plain and honest exposures ?

And then, forsooth, to crown all, we must be cautious how we speak of hell and utter denunciations against the workers of iniquity. And all execrations are to be carefully eschewed, and all comminations and all excommunications from heaven, and a soft silken way of discoursing before this generation is to be adopted. Who are these legislators to the pulpit ? Who are these comptrollers of Christ's ambassadors ? Who are these purifiers of the gospel, and abridgers of the liberty of its prophets ? If God hath given us our commission to set forth His whole revealed counsel, who dare gainsay Him, or which of us dare disobey Him ? We hold our lives in our right hand ; that is pledge enough of our honesty. We have only one alternative,—to speak the truth, to cry aloud, and spare not, and tell the world their sins, and this evil generation their evil deeds. I understand that our brief is the word of God, and our pattern the word of God, and the bar of our judgment the word of God, and that while we adhere to the word of God we are guiltless before God and before men.

## XXXVII.

### THE REST OF THE SABBATH.

GEN. II. 2, 3.

*And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.*

**I**N undertaking, by the grace of God, to discourse of that holy ordinance of the Sabbath which the Almighty hath, by His example and His precept, enforced upon mankind, we do not enter upon the consideration of it in all its uses and employments, and the many questions concerning it which have been agitated, but simply to consider it as the season appointed for rest to all creatures who know the ordinances of the living God.

The Almighty, who is wise in counsel and excellent in working, did not create the present habitable world by one going forth of His almighty word, but divided His work into successive portions, bringing forth everything in its time and season, to prepare the way for that which was to follow. And as His work proceeded under His creating hand, He cast an eye over its successive parts, and saw that they were very good, delighting Himself, and rejoicing over everything which He made. And when He had created man, for whom the five previous creations did but prepare the way, He gave him His benediction, and conferred on him a sovereignty over all. And on the seventh day, He rested from the work which He had made, and God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all the works which God created and made.

The narrative of the generation of the heavens and the earth teacheth us that the Creator is a being who in His works re-

gardeth the order of their kinds, delighteth Himself with what He doth, and sanctifieth a space for rest when His work is finished; that in the Omnipotent there is a desire of rest no less than of action, the one attending and waiting upon the other, and that time is not less properly occupied by the one than the other; and that rest is the holy and sanctified season for which action prepareth the way. When His work was ended, while yet it was the sixth day, the Lord reviewed all creation, and pronounced it good. The seventh day was not, therefore, a day of reflection or review of what He had done, but a repose from doing anything, indicating a feature in the Divine nature no less important than those features of power and goodness which the work of the six days reveal. God having constituted man a sort of divinity over all His works here below, and given him occupation for his various faculties, likewise appointed to him a sacred recess, when he might in like manner cease from his labours, and allow his body and his mind a cessation from their works.

Now, if man had never fallen from his integrity, but remained in constant walk and conversation with God, and employing himself with all the innocency and benevolence whereof God gave him the pattern, he would still have preserved his seventh day, and sanctified it to rest and repose. In it he would have done no work with his body, or with his mind; conceived no new schemes, and executed no old ones. Though there was no sweat of his brow, and the earth brought forth spontaneously, still on the seventh day he would have delighted to rest. And though there was no express worship of God on that day, nor need to stir his faculties of devotion up—no reckoning of religious progress to keep, nor work of repentance—no meditations of reform, nor any of the exercises with which we now fill the Sabbath up; still the first man would have found it the most necessary and holy day of all the seven. To be free from engagement, to be delivered from constraint of duty, to take no charge of the fruits of the ground, and to exercise no sovereignty over the creatures which God had put under his feet, but simply to exist for himself, to be refreshed and recruited—time so spent he would have found the most delightful of the seven parts of time. For God hath

not made man's body of the adamant, that it should not be worn down ; and He hath taught, by His own example, that of the Highest Spirit it is an attribute to feel the delight of rest.

Now if God, in the only putting forth of active power which is recorded, did hallow unto Himself a season of rest, as the natural consequence of action ; and if man in Paradise, who toiled not neither did spin, found ample occasion for the same, how much more his fallen children, unto whom he hath consigned an inheritance of toil and labour under the sun ! If Adam knew activity, they know drudgery and slavery ; if Adam knew oversight, they know care and perplexity ; if he knew the exercise of wisdom, they know the warfare of distracted souls ; if he knew the excitement of being happy, they know the exhaustion of trouble and misery in every form ; and if, after six days' round of holy, happy works, and six nights of healthy, balmy sleep, he did relish the return of Sabbath rest and repose, how much more, after six chequered days of weariness, and six nights of broken and interrupted rest, ought we to need and hail that hallowed morn, which brings to us cessation and tranquillity, as far as our agitated minds can compose themselves ! The Sabbath is our refuge, the refuge both of body and of mind. It is, or ought to be, the day which makes life endurable—the caravanserai of time, where we rest and refresh for another stage—the indefeasible right of both the body and mind, which God hath chartered to everything that hath in it the breath of life.

Therefore, He not only forbade us to engage in any work on that day, but He gave also our servants, of every degree, full emancipation, binding us not to order what He binds them not to obey ; and not only our servants, but our cattle, and every thing that is within our gates ; thereby making it apparent that it is the right of all animated nature, a condition of their well-being, which the Creator appointed to be to them no less essential than meat or drink. By the same law that He gave them power of action, He appointed them seasons of rest. And whoever hath the benefit of this action, is bound by God to afford to them the seventh portion of time as their own, sacred to rest and repose.

At the very time He bestowed upon us our supremacy of the earth, and called our active faculties into play, He ordained them a season of requiescence ; so that in what right we plough and reap the field, and use the help of every creature, in the same right we plough not, neither reap the field, nor use the labour of any creature upon the seventh day. . The latter is as ancient an ordinance of God as the former, and more holy, as being uttered on a more holy occasion. Therefore, there resteth on us the strongest possible obligation to observe the seventh day as a day of rest from all week-day occupation.

Let us not grudge at this requisition of God that the seventh day be unoccupied, as if He made an invasion upon our liberty, and gruded us the enjoyment of our time, or sought to dispossess us of the seventh part of all our gains. The Sabbath was made for man, not for God. We are to benefit from it. And the only part the Almighty hath in the matter is to interpose His authority against doing ourselves any harm. How can any one think the Almighty wrongs us in bestowing upon us a seventh day of rest ? When He made the world, and gave man the care of it, He might have said, "Let thy care never cease, prune the exuberance of nature, and rule over the living creatures without any remission. Every hour ye idle I will require it at your hand." Or when the world fell, He might say, "Now, sweat on in your sultry toil, consume the sinews of your strength and the faculties of your mind without any intervention of repose. Fight the fight of life till death bring you to a stand. Enslave each other, and exact your slavery at your will ; I take no more charge of you, and leave you to the play of your own free will." But instead of thus abandoning His creature to itself, He gave it statutes to preserve it from its own wilfulness, and this of the Sabbath He placed among the first.

The Almighty perceiving that man would not be merciful in his power over his fellow-man, or over the cattle of the field, did thus enter His own voice against their total debasement and degradation, and gave their body and mind a space in which no one could call them servant, in which they might feel at pristine liberty to transact affairs with themselves and

their God. Perceiving, also, that the world with its pleasures and engagements would encroach more and more upon man, and occupy all his time, and so banish all higher thoughts and higher cares, He took the summary measure of setting off the seventh part of time, in which it should not be lawful to do any work. And in His wisdom perceiving that the constitution of both body and mind would be thereby better kept up in strength, and the enjoyment of action be more relished after a rest, and the strenuousness of action better sustained in the prospect of it, He interfered and constituted the Sabbath for our welfare. Perceiving also that the mind had faculties which were best developed in quiet and retirement, and that in becoming acquainted with all things under the sun it might drop acquaintance with itself, and lose the high relish and entertainment which spring from a well-ordered breast, He did appoint us this season inviolable to muse and meditate and commune with our own souls. And wishing to be remembered by His creatures, and not to be eclipsed by worldly objects, or forgotten in worldly cares, He made provision of time, and commanded cessation of care, that the soul might have communion and fellowship with her God. Likewise desiring that the memory of its creation might never depart from the face of the earth, and that she should devoutly rejoice before the God who brought her beautiful and replenished from the womb of ancient chaos, He appointed this great commemoration of creation weekly to recur. And, finally, for us Christians, who are born again and created anew, and raised from death unto life, and from the slavery of sin to the inheritance of the saints in light, He caused it to be changed to the day for ever memorable by the triumph of our Lord and Saviour over death and the grave.

It is, therefore, the grossest of all the delusions of Satan, that we are losers by this appointment of God, or that it was designed to infringe our liberty, or diminish our enjoyment. It was to defend us from the exorbitant demands of masters, and the more exorbitant demands of worldly cares ; it was to clear a little space for every creature, in which it might have its liberty, and be delivered from all the conventions of

society and bondage of this world. And he that availeth not himself of this great privilege, not only disavoweth the authority of God, but depriveth himself of one of the greatest blessings of existence.

It is the part, therefore, of every wise man to delight in this day of recreation and refreshment; to defend it as one of the great rights of humanity, and as one of the bulwarks of our salvation. Therefore, brethren, having exhorted you to set apart seasons of rest and repose upon your own accord, we cannot but be urgent that you should especially attend to this prescribed to you by the Lord. Saith the commandment, "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates."

The work of our hands is first of all to cease, and the labours of our bodies; and not of ours only, but of every creature over whom the Lord giveth us control. The preparing of our victuals, which is a necessary act, and the doing of merciful offices, our Saviour hath sanctioned by His own example, because the Almighty bringeth on that day, no less than on others, the return of our bodily wants, and the occurrence of unfortunate accidents. Man was not made for the Sabbath, otherwise every seventh day the laws of human nature would have stopped their course, and animal nature would not have needed his help. There would have been no offence of the elements or of savage creatures to have called upon him for his resources of defence. But these calls continuing as on other days, he is to answer them as on other days, and preserve his being in a healthy state, and also the being of those around him. All Judaical observation of it, therefore, which would place the body upon short allowance, or leave the condition of the sick ungarded, or not sufficiently provide for the comfort of the inferior creatures; all ascetic inflictions, of fasting, of mortification, of discomfort, of confinement, or of suffering, are to be avoided as not only not called for, but corrupting the very purpose and intention of

the holy day, which is a day of refreshment and restoration, not a day of penance and humiliation.

But while the comfort and health both of the body and the mind are attended to, it is only the better to enable us to comply with the true spirit of the ordinance ; and therefore this is not to be made a handle of for preparations of feasting, or vain adorning of the person, for excursions or pleasure, for assemblies of our kindred, or any other thing which would hinder us from reaping the advantages of the institution. In this I go so far that I would not have the rest of the Sabbath broken up even by the too large demands of public worship, which is instrumental to the rest of the Sabbath, and not a part of its rest, and which often becomes the laborious employment of the Sabbath instead of being part of its spiritual recreation. We should have time for both body and mind to come into a state of repose. Tranquil moods and sweet quiet thoughts should recreate our souls. We should allow its rest to come like oil over our troubled minds. And whatever tends to this solemnising, tranquillising effect should be adopted ; whatever hinders it should be avoided in the employment of the day.

But I depend chiefly for the right enjoyment of the Sabbath's rest upon the exclusion of week-day concerns, which being well done, I think the soul instructed in the knowledge of God would find its way by itself to the right employment of the holy day. Now, first of all, it will not be denied that our calling should not be followed in whole or in part : that we should shut the doors and windows of our shops, and withhold our feet from the resort of business, our tongues from discoursing, and our minds from being agitated with its cares and concerns. When we go to rest at night we shut out the light which lingereth in the heavens, and we bar out the ingress of the world, and compose our minds from irritating thoughts. So when we go to rest on Sabbath from weekly employments, we should not only close the door of our workshops, but, if possible, shut out the cares and thoughts which harbour about them. All letters of business, all messengers of business, and all conversation of business,

and all books which treat of business, we should exclude; all journeys for the prosecution of business, all visits of travellers come on that end, all their bribes and overtures to truck and barter we should utterly reject. For we do but cheat ourselves (God, who looketh to the heart, we cannot cheat) if, when we shut the doors and windows of our shops, we open an active speculation within our minds, and carry on in the chambers of thought those concerns which we have refrained from in visible places. And as the commandment is upon our servants and the stranger within our gates, so we should hinder our workmen from doing anything on our account, and we should require nothing of them save what is necessary for our own health and the health of the cattle. Moreover, we should not be instrumental to the work of others, and therefore we should not command our servant to buy nor buy ourselves. We should not encourage any traffic, nor employ any Sabbath vehicles. Our Sabbath journeys should be indeed Sabbath-day journeys; and if we employ the services of our servants and cattle, it should be to them after Sabbath-day measures, for health or refreshment's sake, by no means for labour or for profit. I do reckon it, therefore, inconsistent with the ordinance of God to encourage the buying and selling of commodities, the plying of public vehicles, the attendance and labour of servants, and whatever else hinders the rest of any fellow-mortal, or of any inferior creature.

After this cessation of week-day work in ourselves and those over whom we have influence hath been brought about, the next thing to be guarded against is, lest any work be substituted in its stead; for the faculties of man, bodily and mental, after a week of excitement, do not easily come into a state of repose. So that, fearing to disobey God, nature seeks out as much action in some other quarter, and thinks that thereby she satisfies the conditions of the commandment, and partakes of its blessing. Hence your excursions into the country, and feasting in the country, which ends often in carousing. And you have parades in the parks, and loitering in the fields, and sleeping listlessly at home, and parties of pleasure, and musical parties, and a thousand other

inventions for occupying the time. Now, if week-day work was forbidden, week-day vanities and week-day dissipations were still more forbidden. It was not to make it a day of double riot and double crime the Almighty forbade honest and honourable work. By forbidding the more worthy, He surely forbade the less worthy; by forbidding regular habits, He surely forbade irregular habits; by forbidding business, He surely much more forbade crime. Now, I have no ascetic views of the Sabbath, and grudge not to myself nor to the people whatever may comfort and refresh their minds. And if they find that end to be served by walking forth to meditate and muse upon the handiworks of God, to escape from the noisy city, and rest in some retired rural place, I commend them to that or any other method which they find best for fulfilling the purpose of God. But sure I am, a crowded vehicle, whether by land or water, or a public inn, or a crowded garden, or a bustling highway, or a park parade, are not the places most fitted for repose and retirement; and they who so spend the Sabbath, and call it keeping the commandment, do but lie unto the Lord and their own soul.

What, then, are we who are penned in this city all the week long not to take our ease and our enjoyment upon the only privileged day which is allowed to us? Most surely. Take your ease and enjoyment, but do not your own pleasure on the holy day of the Lord. It is not to be a sort of variety in the seven days, or a holiday in the common sense of that word, but to be a relief from all the rest; to shut noise and bustle out, not to vary the place and kind of them. Least of all was it to bring up the arrears of the week's work, or to undertake a new and less offensive kind of work, but to do no work, and to shut out levity and folly, and give the mind a season to itself, in which it might gravely ruminate and reflect upon its own condition.

In short, it is to rest, to be our own master; and being our own master, to rest and be at peace. The soul being so disengaged, shall make work for herself. She will betake herself to the past and to the future. She will think of her pleasures and her pains, of her loves and her hatreds, of her prospects, present and everlasting, of her habits and her

customs, of her hopes and her fears. Being out of agitation and bustle she will contemplate herself, and examine and know herself. Being removed from care about this world, care about the world to come will arise of its own accord ; being removed from the business of other men, the business of herself will be the burden of her thoughts ; and in this determination of her thoughts homewards lies all the advantage. For no sooner doth anxiety upon our condition seize us, than we betake ourselves to be informed by the word of God, which can alone give us information upon this essential question. Men are lost because the world that is eclipseth the world that is to come. The Sabbath taketh off this eclipse, and the aspect of future things is discovered. The cry of our most dear interests, our everlasting interests, is not heard amidst the bustle and business of this world ; therefore the Lord silenceth these noises by the ordinance of the Sabbath, and the voice of nature is heard.

Therefore I go not to assign to you any course of employment for the Sabbath ; I plead simply the fulfilment of the ordinance, that you work not, and think not of your vocations, and allow your minds to come into repose from this world's agitations. Then nature and the Spirit of God will direct you to proper occupations. You will go to the house of prayer out of choice ; you will go to your closet out of choice ; you will read the holy page out of choice ; you will shun intrusive company out of choice ; and out of choice you will tune your thoughts to holy and spiritual subjects. All I ask is, keep the intrusion of the world out. Shut your door upon worldly men, shut your ear upon worldly talk, shut your eye upon all ephemeral and worldly reading. Fulfil the statute, and see that those in your household do, and it will come to pass ere long that you will derive the benefit of the statute, both as to bodily and spiritual refreshment. Your soul shall make progress towards heaven ; you shall learn to live above the world ; and from all the weariness of the week you will run like a tossed and tempest-driven ship to the haven of your Sabbath rest.

To those who have no stated work to perform, the Sabbath should break the current of their ordinary thoughts and cares.

No man is without a course of life of some kind or other. It may tend to activity, to pleasure, to recreation, to thought, to erudition ; the object of the Sabbath is to interrupt these, and put the mind upon its shifts to find out other occupation not connected with secular things. And every man hath schemes on hand which fill up his hopes and fears and wishes ; the object of the Sabbath is to call a truce to their action. And every man hath ordinary topics of discourse, and ordinary intercourse of society ; the object of the Sabbath is to interrupt these, and put him upon finding others congenial with the day. In short, it is to stem the tide of worldliness from overflowing the soul, as commonly it doth, that it may have time to meditate upon those interests which are above the world and beyond the boundaries of time.

## XXXVIII.

JESUS OUR EXAMPLE, THAT WE SHOULD FOLLOW HIS STEPS.

**T**HE work of Jesus in the flesh is twofold—that which preceded His baptism, and that which followed after it. The former starteth from circumcision, by which, becoming a debtor to keep the whole law, He kept it to the letter, every jot and tittle of it, abating not one ; so that, when He came to His baptism, He could say, “Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.” This part of His work was pure obedience, proper and rigid obedience, of every law, moral, political, and ceremonial, which was imposed upon the inhabitant and inheriter of the land of Canaan. Ceremonial uncleanness He had none ; His flesh was without an inbred, inherent disease, without an unholy issue of any kind ; because He walked in all the statutes and ordinances of the Lord blameless, and so received the promise of freedom from all sorts of disease. He was as obnoxious to disease as any other man, and through His flesh felt all pains and all noisomeness of corruption which flesh is cursed with in all other men, as the Spirit expresseth of Him in all the psalms which speak of His passion ; yet out of the open mouth of all pains and diseases took He our flesh, and bore it pure, holy, and spotless, without one particle of uncleanness or defilement which the eagle-eyed law could challenge. And for His soul, it perfectly discharged itself of all incumbent duties, both toward God and toward man ; keeping the spirit of the commandment as diligently as His flesh did keep the letter of it ; and so was He righteous, “the end of the law for righteousness.” He was obedient to His parents ; He was faithful to His God ; He loved His God with all His heart, His neighbour as Himself. His mind also imbibed the wisdom of the command-

ment, and He delighted in it after the inward man. The law stood embodied in all its holiness, goodness, and justice, in Jesus Christ. He was the man of the law ; at once the proof that man could keep the law, and the example of that perfect and upright man which the law can make ; the model of the earthly man ; such a man as there never was before Him, and such as are not now, for the Church hath nothing to do with this state of flesh ; but such as there shall be multitudes in that day when Israel shall be circumcised in flesh and heart, when God shall sprinkle upon them clean water, and they shall be clean. Christ's life under the law is the prototype of the Jew as he shall be under the new covenant, when God shall give unto him a clean heart, and put a right spirit within him. Thus was Christ in the flesh, with which we have nothing to do ; the head of the body of Moses, the King of the Jews, the Word made flesh. This One we must know no more, if we have known Him heretofore. We are called to know Him according to the spirit, the second form of His work in flesh ; concerning which we are now to discourse, as the basis of the great work which is now proceeding in the Church—the landmark without which all will run upon the rocks of infidelity, or be sunk in the quicksands of superstition and error.

It was a very great work done for mortal flesh, to make it stand up and keep the law of God, and so approve itself a good and sufficient creature of God, even under its condition of mortality. Thereby not only was God's creation of it in its original state proved to be sufficient, but also His support of it under its fallen state ; and the sin against His holy laws was proved to be not a condition of man's nature, but, contrariwise, that righteousness is its condition, and sin the voluntary departure therefrom. If Noah's building of the ark by faith condemned the old world, then Christ's keeping of the law and doing of the will of God in flesh did condemn all men in God's sight, and did justify His creature flesh both against sin and against death. Moses was proved by Jesus to be not a hard master, but the equitable lawgiver of God, and the law itself to be no arbitrary impost, but the true and veritable form of righteous flesh under the condition of death. Flesh

hath done its duty in Jesus; God hath had His own will in His own creature; and He may, if so it please Him, proceed to shew His favour further in it and by it; which till now He could not do, because up to this time it was a debtor to Him, a continual offender: to justify it were to cast down His own judgment-seat; to reward it were to plant iniquity in His throne. But, now that He hath gotten duty out of it, now that it hath acquitted itself to His satisfaction against sin and Satan and death, He may proceed, without loss to His rectitude, to bid it come up into a higher room. Jesus had made flesh to stand up and express the righteous law of God in all the relations of a creature, towards God, towards men, and towards the inferior creatures given into man's hand for care and government; He hath next to make it express the image of God's love and pity and compassion over His sinful creatures; and this being done, He shall be honoured to make it express the image of His power and glory and blessed government for ever. First, He judgeth it guilty of all transgression, by proving it capable of all righteousness, and so doth glorify God against the sinner in condemning him to death; yea, and make out the true nature of sin under the fall, as well as above it, to be a voluntary departure from God, and transgression against Him through our own unbelief. For here is a mortal man, altogether such a one as ourselves, who through faith standeth up in the face of the law, and saith, "Find fault with me, if thou canst;" in the face of Satan, and saith, "Accuse me, if thou canst."

This is the first thing, to magnify the law and make it honourable; but the second is more excellent than this,—to make flesh a vessel for containing and expressing the whole grace, compassion, and sorrow of God over His creatures, falling away from Him; the yearnings of His love after them, and all the repentings of His soul towards them. Justice is a good thing, but mercy is a better thing, for mercy rejoiceth over justice; law is good, but grace is better; and to express this grace which is in His heart towards His graceless children, whom should God choose but that Man who had stood in His uprightness for every jot and tittle of His law? The baptism of Jesus brought Him into the fellowship of God's

sorrows and sufferings over His poor distracted children and His most rebellious house. Tears then became His meat by night and by day ; they mingled in His cup, and made His bed to swim ; all the billows of God passed over Him, and deep called to deep at the noise of His water-spouts. From His baptism He hath the Father to witness of, who then pronounced His name of Father over Him, and announced Him as His well-beloved Son. Heretofore He had the name of Jehovah given Him to keep sacred and holy, by proving the immutable faithfulness of His purpose in the creation of man ; but now He hath the name of Father to glorify, by exhibiting through a human heart the very form of God's Fatherhood unto rebellious children, how long-suffering, how forgiving, how sorrowful, how kind. Jesus' heart now became God's harp for wailing lamentation, as heretofore it had been His inflexible sceptre of righteousness. And herein is revealed the mystery, not only of making man upright, but permitting him to fall into the sorrows of death and the pains of hell. For how, otherwise than by a suffering creature, shall a suffering God be revealed ? Jesus, therefore, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, because God is a Father of sorrows and grief over His children ; who have all strayed, like that prodigal ; and, like him, do wound their Father's heart. For if God had not abiding grief over every son of Adam, like that grief of Jacob over Joseph, how would He command the angels to strike their harps, and all heaven to make melody and gladness, over every sinner that repenteth ? It is most true, and most meet to be remembered, that God is filled with tender compassion and most poignant grief over every one of His children who hath gone astray from Him ; otherwise how would He not have spared His only-begotten Son, but given Him up to the death for us all ? Hath God no bowels ? hath He no compassion ? hath He no tears, and sorrows, and fatherly bowings down of heart, O ye worshippers of an abstract conception, of a tearless Moloch ? Ay, ay ; it was even so, that the world had come to worship a god without a heart, such as Christendom worshippeth even now ; a God of powers and purposes, of punishments and rewards, a thunderer, an even-handed judge, a taskmaster ; but a God of

loves, fit to be the God and Father of men, to flood the channels of man's heart and of social life with love, they no more worshipped: and God sent His Son to set men right, and shew that the mystery of the depth of Godhead lay all wrapped up in the love of a father to a son.

This now was the second great act which Jesus was called to do in the flesh; even to shew therein how low God could condescend, how vile He could make Himself—even a worm, and no man—in order to embrace His dear child, who hath become the companion of the worm. What is Jesus' sufferings, but God's love tracking the downward steps of His suffering child, in order to raise His child again unto glory? But what a mystery, that fallen flesh should hereof be capable! Oh! it reconcileth me to all the misery which my soul is capable of enduring through this fallen estate, to know that through the same, God findeth utterance and expression for all the love that is in His heart to sinners, and all the pain which He endureth on their account. How tenderly He tempereth adversity to their advantage, sickness and pain to their healing. Ah me! what a depth of thought the Lord is bringing His Church into, in acquainting her with the nature of Christ's sufferings; not to appease an angry God, but to tell out the anguish and agony of God's love disappointed, His goodness rejected, His entreaties despised, His gifts scorned, His whole soul turned back upon itself by His ungrateful children! God hath in Him towards man the same love as that day He made him, as that day He gave His Son to die for him, as that day He gave Jesus, exalted unto glory with the fulness of Godhead, as a free gift unto the Church. God made Adam to be the son of God; and what it is to be the son of God, let the bonds which bind the Father unto Jesus, and Jesus back again to the Father, bear witness. All this, Jesus made flesh a fit organ for expressing: grace and truth came by Him: the Father was seen, heard, and felt in Him. It was the Father's reproach He bare, and the Father's reproach did break His heart. It was the Father's agony which He expressed in the garden, and the Father's love which He poured out upon the cross. It was the Father in Him which melted His heart like wax,

which loosened His joints, and poured out His bowels like water. It is not given to me, for I am not acquainted with sorrow, being proud and vain, unbelieving and ungodly, to express the depth of this subject ; but well I discern it, and much do I desire to enter into it more perfectly.

When thus Jesus had expressed all the Father's grace and compassion, all His love and self-sacrifice, towards His guilty children, and shewn forth the new capacities which flesh through the fall had attained unto, of sustaining the burden of God's grief and trouble, He was made meet for entering into His glory. The Son of man had glorified the name of the Father, and now the Father will glorify the Son of man with that glory which He had with the Father before the world was. The eternal Son of God had made no account of that glory and blessedness, but freely poured it out, and became flesh, in order to glorify the name of the Father before the creation ; and now the Father will take Him, flesh as He is, and set Him head over all creation, not only visible, but also invisible. Because He did empty Himself, and humble Himself to the death, therefore God gave Him a name above every name which is named, both in this world and in that which is to come. Flesh having sustained the Father's burden, is deemed worthy to sustain the Father's glory. Having proved Himself both a merciful and a faithful High Priest, He is set over the house of God for ever. He is worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and blessing, because He is the Lamb that was slain. He is filled with the fulness of Godhead, because it pleased the Father that in a body all fulness should dwell. Thus exalted above all principalities and powers and dominions, God giveth Him to the Church for her Head, and that she might enjoy the same fulness, might now enjoy it in the flesh, and put it forth for the ends of God's glory. The body is to grow up into Him, which is the Head, in all things ; and not to stop in her growth until she hath reached the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. It is *now* that the manifold wisdom of God is to be shewn by the Church unto the angels and principalities, and powers in heavenly places. It is *now* that the power of God, put forth in raising Jesus up on high

above all things, is put forth in us who believe. It is in the *earthen vessel* that we have this treasure, that the excellency of the power may be seen to be of God, and not of us.

Now, here it is that we have come short in the doctrine of the hopes of the Church—namely, in thinking that only a small measure of the power of Christ is to be put forth by the Church in the flesh; whereas it is the whole which the Church is intended to manifest before her translation into glory. All of power and government, of grandeur and of 'glory, which the Jews are set forth as about to wield in the flesh, the Church shall in the Spirit wield, before she be taken up into the heavens to come with Jesus. She is now militant, and her fight shall go on till she hath broken to pieces all the power of the enemy. We have to wrestle against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against the spiritual wickednesses in the heavenly places, and we shall be exhibited more than conquerors before the battle be ended. It is to the Church on earth that the glorified Head in heaven is given for power and dominion; it is to us who believe that the promise is given of doing greater works than Jesus did. And to the end we might see flesh was capable of sustaining it, Jesus had the power of ten legions of angels at His command; which He might have used, and could have used, if it had served the end of the Father's glory. And when the zeal of His Father's house was upon Him, with a scourge of small cords He made the thousands in the temple to flee amain; and it is out of the mouths of babes and sucklings that God is to still the enemy and the avenger; and it is the witnesses on earth who are to amplify over the whole earth the work which Moses did in Egypt, which Elias did in Samaria. These, the works which the Church is to perform in flesh anterior to her translation into glory, we shall have occasion to explain in the close of this discourse; for in this also Christ hath set us an example, that we should follow His steps. The works of power which He did were only introductory to those which we are called upon to do. The Church hath to do in flesh upon a grand scale, over the whole earth, such works as He did over the land of Judea, and far greater, because He is gone to the Father.

With slow and stumbling steps we had won our way back to the true doctrine of the second coming of Christ, and the right interpretation of the prophetical Scriptures, as they apply to the Jews, and to Jesus the King of the Jews; and, from the clear truth therein discovered to us, in the honest interpretation of God's word, we had been able to attain unto the knowledge of the high calling of the Church to be the spiritual bride of Jesus, and occupy in the heavenly places the same dignity which we found given to the Jews in the earthly or fleshly state. Years have now passed since the Lord enabled me to discern that the Jew in the flesh was but the type of the Christian in the Spirit; and that every prophecy of the Old Testament, when literally made out in respect to the Jews, was but, as it were, the pitcher in which the waters of the Spirit were held for the Church; or, if to them a pitcher full of water, to us a pitcher full of wine, changed by the word of Jesus, who therein did shew forth His glory. It had also dimly begun to shew itself to my meditation, that the Word made flesh, or the incarnation of the Son of God, is but the crowning summit of the fleshly pyramid; the perfection of the earthly things brought in by Moses; the end of the law for righteousness; the accomplishment of the sacrifice, "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world:" whom a Christian may know in the flesh, for the sake of delivering from the carnal ordinances those who are held under their bondage, but, having known, must soon forget, and, like Paul, know him thus no more, if he would know him after the Spirit; which knowledge hath little to do with His being born of the flesh of the Virgin, the subject son of Joseph, but of His being born from the womb of the earth, the free-born, glorious Son of God; of the seed of David according to the flesh, but declared to be the Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. For the power which worketh in us that believe is not after the measure of that which wrought in the Virgin to generate a holy Child of her sinful flesh, subject to circumcision and the law, to walk as a man under the law of commandments contained in ordinances; which power, great and excellent though it be, by no means measureth or cometh near to the exceeding greatness of His

power within us who believe, "according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come : and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all," (Eph. i. 19-23.) It is not according to the weakness of His flesh, but "according to the riches of His glory," that we are strengthened in the inward man by the Spirit, (Eph. iii. 16.)

This was a great and dizzy height of truth ; and I felt the peril of it, nor did ever open it to the Church without fear and trembling, lest some rash spirits might be tempted to cast themselves down from the pinnacle of the temple, and dash themselves to pieces. And with all my caution I was unable to prevent this fatal issue in the case of a few members of my church, who ran headlong to perdition, saying thus : "Then are we called to another and a higher walk than Jesus walked in the flesh, to a liberty which He knew not of, to an enjoyment which He hath now, but had not then." And so, losing the only landmark of Christ's walk and conversation, they plunged forward into licentiousness, both of the flesh and of the spirit, from which only one or two have ever been reclaimed. This error is the same with that of Hymeneus and Philetus in the primitive Church, and is reappearing in divers parts under the pretence of liberty ; and it ariseth from not understanding the mystery of the body of Christ, whereof the members must be perfected as the Head was. He was made perfect through sufferings, and we through sufferings must likewise be made perfect. Though a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered ; and we, being baptized into the adoption of sons, must in like manner learn obedience. Though He was not yet raised from the dead, He had given into His hand the power of the resurrection at His baptism, and was required to use it for the glory of the Father, who intrusted Him with it, to the end we might have Him in all things for our example to follow His steps. The power of

God given into the hand of the Son of man at His generation was a power to wrestle with flesh and blood, and keep it uniform with the righteous law of God given to Moses, that the offence might abound, and the righteousness of Christ be the more abundant, even universal and complete. But the power of God given into His hand at His baptism was the fulness of the Holy Ghost, to wrestle against principalities, and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, and the wicked spirits in the heavenly places,—to the burden of which greater battle we are called who believe in Him, and do receive power accordingly ; for God sendeth no one a warfare on His own charges. Now, be it carefully observed, that of both these battles, as well the spiritual as the carnal, did our Captain bear the burden in this very flesh of ours ; not as first created, but as weakened by sin ; not as afterwards raised from the dead, in immortal strength and glory, but as lying under the curse and power of death. Herein lieth the whole strain of the subject, the very ground and basis of the mystery of godliness, that in flesh, as flesh hath brought itself to be, the unchangeable purpose of God in creating flesh is to be attained ; and the glory of that purpose only the more gloriously manifested by the attempt of Satan, sin, and death, to obscure and defeat it. Flesh was created to manifest God's perfect image, and to hold His indefeasible lordship ; and to this, the end of its creation, must flesh attain ; otherwise the Creator is altogether overseen in His design and defeated in His working ; and there is some power in existence over and beyond the living God, the "fate" of the heathens, the "evil principle" of the Gnostics and Manicheans. But behold whereto flesh hath fallen, even to manifest the image of corruption and death, and to be lorded over by sin and Satan ; and the awful conclusion of a power over and beyond God's, is to be avoided only by flesh going forward out of this lowly estate into that greatness of strength and glory whereto it was destined of its Maker ; proving thereby no defeat of God, but only a hiding of His purpose for a season, to the end of breaking and exposing that false head of knowledge which Satan had set up in the creation. Satan cometh on with his wiles to defeat the Lord's purpose in the

creation of flesh, and falleth into the pit which he himself hath digged ; whereas flesh doth clean escape, and hold on its glorious course to the head and helm of Divine government. Satan wrestleth a fall with flesh, and we fall together, clasped in mortal conflict ; but say not therefore that flesh is overcome ; wait till you see who ariseth from the fall, and who falleth to arise no more. The lowly bed into which the wrestlers are fallen together is death ; and there, in the depths below, is the controversy wrought out ; and the victory will be to that which ariseth into life and glory, the defeat unto that which sinketh into the bottomless pit, and weltereth in the lake for ever.

Now, if it be a part of the deep-laid purpose of God that the Word is to take part in this issue, as we know it is,—for in Him was the eternal purpose all purposed, who is the beginning of the creation of God,—then must the Word become flesh ; for, even amongst men, he that striveth must strive lawfully ; He must have no advantage of His Godhead in the conflict, otherwise flesh faileth and Satan prevaieth. To send Christ into the conflict in other flesh than mortal flesh is to give up the victory to Satan : to send Him in with Adam's state of created flesh is likewise to give Satan the credit of having overreached God, at all events, in the creation of Adam, (and to overreach God once is to dethrone Him for ever :) to send Christ in as God, and not as man, with new powers added to the original powers of man, is also to give up the battle to Satan and confess God baffled : to say, as they do, "Here is the Godhead acting, and here the manhood ;" or to mix them up together, and say, "It is a compound and amalgam of the two which prevaieth over the enemy ;" is to dishonour the Creator, to exalt the devil, and to lay man at his feet, confessedly vanquished of him. But to send the Word into the battle as very flesh—flesh in mortal conflict with Satan—down, down in the arena of mortality ; to send Him in, made of a woman, made under the law, in the likeness of sinful flesh, to find the battle, as the battle was, going hard against us, and join Himself to the conflict with our weapons, side by side with us, hand to hand against the enemy,—this surely is the way in which the name of God in

the creation of man is to be glorified, the good and glorious ends of flesh justified, the wiles of the devil, and his pretensions to an independent head of knowledge, defeated, and the enemies of God's purposes overwhelmed for ever.

The Lord hath much honoured me His unworthy servant to keep this position with a strong and unyielding hand ; and, in looking back over the long and wearisome struggle which for these many years I have had to maintain against the array of all sects and Established Churches within the land, I do devoutly praise God, and give Him all the glory ; for surely, without His presence with me, I should long ere this have yielded up some point or other to the enemy—perhaps have given in altogether. But, so far from yielding one jot or tittle of the position, I feel it needful to take it up with a firmer hand, and to go round its bulwarks and fortify them anew. For, whereas there may be found in my writings, here and there, an expression where I give the honour of Christ's work to His Godhead,—not having myself escaped the trammels of the schools, or forgotten the dialect of Babylon,—I do now solemnly protest that all such language is derogatory from the honour of God, which is altogether involved in this issue, with it to stand, or with it to fall—namely, that man, as He made him, is able in all respects to answer the ends for which He made him, of being a true, perfect, and complete image of God, a sufficient lord over all creation ; which Christ proved by becoming man, and as man bodying forth the image of God, and holding dominion over all creation, and reclaiming what seemed to be lost, but was only buried out of sight for a season ; pulling down what hath dared to lift up the head against its Maker, and upholding all that trust in Him. It is short-sighted and erroneous to think we honour God by leaving the manhood of Christ, and finding occasion for His Godhead in this His work ; by finding His manhood at a loss, and, as it were, bringing it to a nonplus, in order to make room for His Godhead to shew itself. And wherever, by any slip or oversight, I may have thus spoken, I have erroneously spoken ; inasmuch as it is no honour to God to bring Him in here and there to eke out and patch up His work, nor according to the truth of His purpose, which is to

shew Himself no otherwise than through man, as His chosen seat and representative within the bounds of creation.

This, which is the true doctrine of God, were only one great system of humanitarianism, making man to be God, but for the great counteracting truth, that man is a creature constituted to do everything by faith upon God, and so to acknowledge God in all his ways. He is but the image and likeness of another, to whom, and not to himself, beareth he testimony in every line and at every turn,—man the visible workman, God the invisible doer of the work ; man the head, the eye, the ear, the body, God the spirit by whom the body is moved and empowered, and to which it is obedient. And hence it is that so much is made of faith in all the Scriptures, because without it man is a witness to himself ; and, being by his constitution a witness to God, hath, the moment he liveth otherwise than by faith, taken up arms against God, and is in a state of actual rebellion : and in this state God cannot support him, but must suffer him to go down out of sight, for to let him abide in the sight of any creature would be to deceive that creature out of the knowledge of God. This is the dignity of man's being, to be altogether like unto God ; and the way in which man requited God for this is, to do everything, whether in word or deed, in the name of God, and nothing in his own name ; that is, to live by faith upon God, and not by power of his own ; and he needeth only to do so, in order to be supported through good report and through bad report. This man failed in at the first, and so came to the worst in the conflict with the enemy, and incurred the condition of death : but all was not lost, for death also is a condition known unto God, and if man had held to God in his adversity, he would have found it to be better for him than his prosperity. The Son of man did so : He came into the conflict late, very late, in the day, when the battle went hard against us ; yet was He nothing daunted by the multitude of the slain and the overwhelming power of the enemy ; but, weakening Himself to the condition of the meanest soldier, of a worm and no man, He did everything in the name of God, and trusted all to his God ; and fainted not, nor was weary, but bore unto the end,

though "every one turned from his own battle and fought against the King of Israel alone." All that flesh can bear He bore; and death He shunned not, nor hell, but took the lowest and the worst cast of it; acquitting Himself in every place of His trust as a man, by believing in God; and God proved His purpose in the creation of man to be unchanged, His love never a whit abated, His resources still adequate to His ends; and that all the while He had been but waiting for a man who would trust Him, in order that this man might express the perfectness of His image, and hold under Him and for Him the sovereignty of the created world. Jesus proved that a mortal man lacketh only to have faith in God in order to have the presence and power of God with him in all his ways; that if our faith were as a grain of mustard-seed we should say unto this sycamine-tree, "Be removed and planted in the sea," and it should be done.

I cannot tell how these views of the work of Jesus do comfort my soul, and open daylight into the future hopes of the church in the flesh. For, if it was proper for Christ to fight the battles of flesh against the wicked spirits, in suffering, weak, and dying flesh, by the hand and help of faith alone, then must it be proper to us also; for between Him and us there is no difference, either in the inherent qualities of our flesh, or the reality of that faith whereby His flesh, the sister of the worm, was made mighty in word and deed over all the power of the enemy. There are not two kinds of flesh, "one flesh of men;" there are not two kinds of faith, "one faith." What Jesus through faith did in flesh, flesh is at all times competent to do. Did He, being a Son in the Eternal Godhead, become a weak man, a trampled worm and no man, freely and willingly, out of devotedness to His Father's honour, in order that His Father's faithfulness in the creation of man, and unabated love to fallen man, might be proved; then may I also, being elected of God, and through Christ adopted into the place of a son, willingly and gladly go down into the depths with Jesus, and by the fellowship of His sufferings learn the deep lesson of a Father's love, and teach to others the measures of a son's obedience. For Adam was created son of God—"which was the son of God"—being the

representative of that Person in the blessed Trinity who was purposed in the fulness of time to become man: and every son being bound by the law of his station to make his father's cause his own, Adam should have stood up like a lion against the seducer who called in question his Father's word, and wrenched the serpent's tongue from his lying throat. And no doubt, like Phinehas, he would by such devouring zeal have won to himself the honour of an imperishable priesthood, instead of sinking down, through forgetfulness of his Father and worship of the creature, into the wretched condition of death. But the fatherly heart of God forgot not the deep and unchanging love out of which He created man for a delight unto Himself; and though He could get little or no return for His love, which went hovering about the earth to find a place where the sole of its foot might rest, nor found any till it lighted upon the head of Jesus, still His affection abode in its strength, and His words changed not their deep and pathetic note, saying ever unto the sons of men, "O Ephraim, how can I give thee up; how can I make thee as Admah and Zeboim? My heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together." And if God's sorrow over His lost children did find in the flesh of Jesus a harp whereon it might tell out its bitterest complainings and deepest disappointment, and express the full burden of its wofulness; then in my flesh also may the sorrow of my God over lost sinners also be expressed; and the Church may, as truly as Christ was, become a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The same Spirit of Jesus which in Job and Jeremiah and the Psalmist did find vent to such pining sorrow and piercing lamentation, may find the same in us, the children of this generation, who are called to witness more direful calamities than the world ever witnessed before. Yea, verily to us it by right appertaineth to be the mourners of this generation, because to us hath the Lord revealed the coming woes of men; which we have announced, but no man regardeth, and all refuse to give glory to their God: therefore "our soul shall weep in secret places for your pride: and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord's flock is carried away captive," (Jer. xiii. 17;) and we will say, "Oh that

I had wings like a dove ! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest," (Ps. lv. 6-8.)

The first fruit of the reviving faith of the Church will be to bring her into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, and to conform her unto His death ; for till she descend with Him into the lower parts of the earth, she will never ascend with Him into the heights of His glory : until she be crucified with Him through weakness, she will never be girded with His strength for the battle. It is in the lower parts of the earth that His body is curiously wrought, (Ps. cxxxix. ;) it is from the sorrows of death, the floods of ungodly men, the sorrows of hell, and the snares of death, that the Lord sendeth down and delivereth His Church, girding her with strength, and making her way perfect, (Ps. xviii.) And I believe that now the Lord only waiteth for our humiliation in order to exalt us. And this is the first part of the blessed hope, which the Lord by His Spirit hath set before us. With many words, most wonderful to hear, hath the Holy Ghost called the children of God to humble themselves in the dust, and cry to Him from thence, with most blessed assurances that from thence He will hear our cry, and send mighty deliverance ; " making our feet like hinds' feet, and setting us upon our high places ; teaching our hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken in our arms." This humiliation and deep affliction of His Church I believe that the Lord will accomplish unto the faithful in these our days ; and I will do my endeavour to be a fellow-worker with God in this labour, by endeavouring to lead my brethren down, as the Spirit of the Lord is wont to lead us down, into the valley of vision, to behold the dry bones of the house of Israel, and weep over them.

The beginning of it all is Love, for where there is no love there can be no real grief and poignant sorrow ; and love is not to be found out of God, for God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Love there must be to God before you can take part with God's sorrow over His forlorn and perishing children ; love to Christ, before you can grieve over His despised, dishonoured Name, His blood

trampled under foot, and His Spirit entreated with a continual despite : love to one another there must be, even the bonds of brotherly love, ere we can lament with Jesus over His body the Church—a mangled and deformed, a diseased and disorganised mass : love also to the world, like that which brought Him forth from the bosom of His Father to be made a curse for us, before we can go forth weeping, and bearing precious seed to cast it upon the waters of the unbelieving people. The heart of stone, which our unbelief hath wrought in us, must be turned to a heart of flesh ; and faith can do it—faith, to wit, in the work which Christ hath wrought for all flesh, to take it out of the hands of fear and dread, and bring us into the hope and confidence of little children towards God. To them which believe He giveth power to become the sons of God, even the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry out, Abba, Father. We have even now the form and fashion of a son's heart, for Adam was the son of God ; but sin hath filled it with the bitter waters of guilt and fear ; which Christ by the fire of love hath licked up, and is now on high advanced, to minister unto us the very same spirit of a Son which inspired Him to undertake His sore and sorrowful travail, and bore Him through it without a murmur or complaint. The beginning of love and the beginning of sorrow are therefore in believing without doubt that God hath granted unto us, in Jesus Christ, “ that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us ; that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.” No one who standeth in doubt of his being delivered from sin and misery, from guilt and condemnation, from the flesh, the devil, and the world, and lifted up into the condition of an adopted and accepted son, to be in God's bosom in what nearness Jesus lieth, and to be loved with what love He is beloved—no one who doubteth or disbelieveth his full and free admission into the bosom of God by the side of Jesus, can love as Jesus loveth, or sorrow as He sorroweth. Jesus is the fountain-head of sorrow—or, rather, God is the fountain-head, and Jesus the containing ocean, out of whose fulness it ever overfloweth in

streams to moisten and mellow the heart of man ; for as water is to the parched earth, so is sorrow to the hard heart of man. It may seem strange to say it, but it is most true, that the tears which flow from the eyelids of a man are as needful to the fruitfulness of his heart as the dews which descend from the eyelids of the morning are to the thirsty ground. Now from Jesus sorrow floweth out ; and faith uniteth us to Jesus ; and being one with Him, the tide floweth without interruption. The heart of Jesus is ever full of sorrow over His heartless spouse, His thankless world, and above all His Father's outcast and dishonoured name : it longeth to discharge itself into kindred bosoms : He wanteth those who will weep with Him ; through whom He may weep aloud in the hearing of the hard-hearted world. God's sorrow over the world ceased not with the agony of Gethsemane or the heart which brake on Calvary ; there is still a cause, there is still the same cause, for which He should be filled with sorrow ; yea, there is a far more worthy cause, in that the boundless measure of His love to men is no longer hidden, but revealed in the glorious gift of the risen Jesus unto them : and, instead of being overpowered with the full disclosure of God's unmeasured love, behold, the Church hath lost all sense, all memory, all knowledge of it, and goeth about to deny and doubt, and to hide under a bushel the excellent glory which was committed unto her keeping. Can God be but grieved at His heart to see His most honourable Son treated as an alien within the bounds of that creation which He made, redeemed, and longeth to glorify, all by reason of our unfaithfulness, ingratitude, folly, and pride ? The work of Christ in flesh is persecuted from the face of the earth as detestable iniquity ; His work in the Spirit contemned and derided as the most wild and wretched fanaticism ; and all the dear-bought inheritance of all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places cast away with execration, as the most daring profanation, the most extravagant folly ! Ah me ! wanteth there a theme for sorrow ? And where are the mourners ? where is the living harp on which the wounded spirit of Jesus might ring out, in the hearing of heaven and earth and reckless men, the full measure of His lamentations ? I cannot tell

how I wonder at the hardness of our hearts who believe in these things. Surely we are a remorseless and impenitent people.

If love, then, be the door of entrance into sorrow—for how can a man grieve if he have no tenderness of heart to be wounded, no losses nor crosses nor widowed affections over which to weep?—how, oh how shall we be lifted up into love, that we may be able to go down into sorrow, and make common cause with our God over the present most grievous state of His Church and His creatures! In no other way can the region of love be entered, but by escaping out of the region of fear, where dwelleth nothing but sadness, trembling, and the shadow of death. And how shall we escape out of this, the region of the horrible pit, in which the conscience of man doth bind him down under the guilt of sin, and the present oppressive sense of shortcoming and transgression of God's holy laws? Oh, how otherwise, my brethren, but by receiving from the hand of Jesus the gift of a conscience cleansed by His blood,—of a law satisfied and made honourable by His righteous life! Thou weariest thyself in vain, and dost but sink deeper and deeper in the mire, while thou seekest to clear thine own account with God, which Jesus hath cleared for all flesh, by that perfect righteousness which He wrought under the law, before His public acknowledgment in baptism as the Son of God, and entrance upon His free calling as a Son of God, to body forth the love of the Father, and all the Father's sorrow over His thankless children. If Jesus, though the eternal Son of God, and generated into flesh the holy child of God, must yet travel through thirty years of hard servitude under an earthly master, which is Moses, and acquit Himself to the full of all the obligations and arrears which God had upon flesh, before He could be avouched the Son of God, and receive the Spirit of adoption, and enter upon the heartbreaking sorrows of a Son,—how, I pray, shouldest thou expect, O man, to be brought into the same emancipation from bonds, the same commonness of heart with God, the same overflowings of sorrowful love, until thou shalt have acted faith upon the work of Christ, for satisfaction of all God's claims upon thee, and clearing away of all thy guilt in

His sight? Thinkest thou to step up into the dignity of a son, without laying off the bonds of the slave, the chains of the guilty culprit? And how shalt thou do this, otherwise than by faith in the work of Jesus under the law, in that name Jesus, which saveth His people from their sins? Therefore put away thy fears, O heart-bound sinner, for Jesus hath done justice to thine offended God: thy Creator is satisfied with all flesh,—in respect of law-keeping its servitude is finished; it is come of age, and needeth not to be under tutors any more. Your Father sendeth you your title of sonship; why take you it not up? He adopteth you into His family from the place of a servant; why go you not in? He openeth to you His bosom; why go you not forward to embrace Him? He stretcheth you out the golden sceptre, as to His queen; why goest thou not forth to touch it, and seat thyself by His side in glorious majesty? What meaneth this burden-bearing bondage, these stripes of fear, this sadness, this despair? Be done with this grief on thine own account: thy account is settled, and thy burden is cast upon the Lord; come in, the Lord hath need of thy griefs; but thou must first be assured that thou art His son, and as a son thou must lie in thy Father's bosom, and hear the whisperings of His love, the sighings of His sorrow, the heavings of His troubled heart; then go forth impregnated with the like generous disposition of loving and saving sinners, and begin to endure all things in order to bring thy God's love near to the ears of savage men. Thou must believe that Jesus hath made thy griefs His, and borne them all; and now in thy turn thou must make His griefs thine, and bear them forth and sing them to the desert winds, if the hearts of men be too hard to hearken unto thee. To suffer is our calling, to have the full fellowship of Christ's sufferings, and to be conformed unto His death; but no one can touch with his little finger this mighty load, unless he do first believe himself to be a son, and get quit of his own guilty fears. Every particle of suffering which ariseth from the sting of past guilt, or from the rankling pain of abiding roots of sin, or from the shame of exposure, or from the actual exposure of our crimes, is not suffering for righteousness' sake, is no fellowship of Christ's sufferings, but the punishment of

unbelief and actual wickedness. Therefore believe thou, O sinner, that thy guilt is atoned for, and break off thy sins by repentance, and lead a holy life by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; and then shalt thou begin to suffer with Christ, and to bear the burden of the sorrows of God. But be not deceived, there is no selfishness in God, and as little must there be in thee, if thou wouldst be the image of God; therefore, thou must abjure thy fears concerning thyself, and put away all actings of thy self-love, the service of thy self-will; for it is all rebellion, and lifting up of thyself against God. Thou must receive thy forgiveness, as thou receivedst thy creation, without any act of thine own, out of the pure goodness of God, served out to thee by the laborious and painful work of Jesus. And if thou wilt not, thou mayest not, thou canst not come near as a son: stand back, and make way for them that are humbler than thou, who will not bandy words with their Redeemer; who are not too proud to receive His gifts, but will come into the fellowship of His sorrows, and of His joys, by His own way of free grace and undeserved bounty. Down into the dust, O sinner! and confess thyself a debtor who hath nothing to pay; and thy Master will freely forgive thee all, and make thee one of His stewards, to go forth and communicate His stores unto the rest of men. But, if thou thyself wilt not take promotion by the way of Another's deservings, how shalt thou be a minister of that gospel of promotion to others, by the same way of forgiveness for the merit of Another? Oh! it is pride that shutteth the door against natural sorrow: the child is too proud to confess its fault, which the Father longeth to forget, and so there is no room for tears and sorrow. We can express no repentance in the sight of the world, until we have put away our unrelenting pride, bowed ourselves in the dust, and received full and free absolution. Then the sorrow floweth in by the door of love, we become weeping Magdalenes, because we have been forgiven much. Love looseth the cords of the heart, and openeth therein the fountains of the depths of sorrow, which are locked up by pride: and rivers of tears run down our eyes, because men keep not the law of God. Repentance

hath no place in that soul which hath not tasted of forgiveness. And when forgiveness is felt, then the soul hath liberty to discover the depth of its sin; for what is sin when not seen in the light of God's love? We wist not it was the High Priest against whom we spake, the merciful and faithful High Priest; and now that we know it, we grieve to have so spoken: we wist not it was our aged venerable Father, the Ancient of Days, against whom we dealt those blows; and now that we know it, we weep bitterly to have wounded His heart as we have done. O sinner! thy words are against thy Father; Him it is whom thou cursest, Him whom thou fightest against. When the Father entereth into the heart by the door of Jesus Christ, His gift to us, then we can confess our sin, and all sin, for sin is one: then we can feel how grievous sin is, and repent with continual repentance, and mourn with incessant mourning. But till we know a Father's love, by knowing that we are forgiven of Him for our infinite transgressions, we have no word of love to carry out to men. We see them not as the dearly beloved of God; our mouths are shut by our unbelief; we have nothing heartfelt to present to them, and we have nothing rejected to mourn over. But Jesus mourned because He was rejected, and the Father rejected in Him. He knew whom He bore, what a gracious benefactor, what a loving God, what a gift, what a salvation, what a deliverance, what an escape from perdition, what a promotion, what a blessedness, what a glory He bore in His heart, in His words, in His hand; and to see men so mad, so wicked, so ungodly as to reject all this, did indeed grieve His soul, and bring Him into utter abjectness, hopelessness, and almost despair. Methinks I hear Him say, on the eve of the agony, "And is it come to this? are all my Father's labours of love, and all my self-devotedness come to this? and must I go out of the world rejected, must my Father's love be fruitless, must my brethren perish? is there then no more hope, no more salvation, and are men utterly undone for ever?" The thing that loosed and enlarged the sorrows of His heart, was the knowledge of His Father's love to the children of men, and their rejection of the same; He felt the shame of it, the sin of it, to be all His own. He had taken

our cause upon Himself, and it proved heavier than He had thought it to be; He was ashamed of us; our sins, or as He saith, *His* sins, (for He maketh them His own,) took hold upon Him, and shame covered His face, and He was unable to look up to God. He was not unprepared for it, He had oft spoken of it; and before He became flesh, when He stood as the Word, He had often foretold it by His Spirit in the Prophets and the Psalms; but the experience of it surpassed all anticipations and premonitions, and it broke His heart. Oh, how the love of God openeth the floodgates of the heart! The Church shall never know sorrow, till she know love; she shall never go forth with Him bearing the precious seed, until she know the love of the Father; and she shall never return with joy, bringing her sheaves along with her, till she hath sown in tears. Everything standeth still for want of the faith of the love of God unto ourselves, and to all men. This is not a work but an act of faith; yet is it the beginning, the continuance, and the consummation of all work. Wherefore I do beseech you, oh all of ye who are hoping and desiring to see the salvation of your God, that you would be filled with the love of your heavenly Father, and have your hearts full of it always. Oh! I cannot reach the depth of these things, my heart is so hard, my mind is so shattered, my tongue is so fast bound. I wait for the anointing of the Spirit, in order to utter what the Lord hath given me to discern, yea and to understand; for the Lord hath made me to understand the mystery of His truth in certain disjointed fragments, for I know nothing as I ought to know it.

How closely love and sorrow are linked together in this the estate of the Church in flesh, is by nothing so apparent as by the life of the Son of God, who embodied the fulness of the Father's love; concerning whom it is written, that "his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men; that he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, oppressed and afflicted, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself unto him who judgeth righteously." When comparing Himself with the fathers, who had trodden the path of affliction before Him, He thus describeth

His condition more hopeless, more helpless than them all : " Our fathers trusted in thee : they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered : they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. But I am a worm, and no man ; a reproach of men, and despised of the people," (Ps. xxii. 4-6.) Now He setteth an example that we should follow His steps ; and He Himself declared that the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant greater than his Lord. And how often warneth He His disciples of the afflictions they should have to endure for His name's sake, being cast out of the synagogues, and esteemed as the off-scourings of the earth ; yea, as fellows who deserved not to live, so that they who would kill us should think they did God service. And why this excess of suffering He Himself declareth, " These things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor me." Let the disciple of Jesus, therefore, prepare himself to suffer, for suffer he must, if he carry within him the love of God to sinful men ; for however strange it be, it is not the less true that a wicked man can bear anything sooner than the love of him whom he hath wronged ; and yet it is likewise true that you shall not otherwise convert him from his wickedness than by manifesting the love, and bearing the malice which it awakeneth ; for when the devil in the sinner hath expended the black poison of malice, the man beginneth to discover himself, remorse and repentance come apace, and the way is opened for righteousness and true holiness ; for he who dareth to disturb the strong man in his house must be prepared for the strong man's resentment. He must be armed with patience and with forgiveness, and with long-suffering love. He must besiege him with the artillery of love, if he would dislodge him ; for the devil can bear anything but the coals of love. This is the only charm against Satan to dislodge him from the bosom of a sinful man ; and forasmuch as we be sent into the world by Jesus for the same end, and on the same errand, as He was sent by the Father, we must be armed with the same weapons and war the warfare on the same charges. Out of love is the fountain of our sorrow, to see our Father's children so seduced and astray ; and our sorrowful love leadeth us into every in-

genious device, at all risk and hazard, at all expense of comfort and ease, to deliver these prodigals from their misery, and bring them back again to the communion and fellowship of their Father's love; who, being recovered and forgiven, embraced, clothed, adorned, and shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, do straightway catch the spirit of the family from the loving Father of it, and forthwith proceed on the same errand of toil and trouble, of labour and sorrow, to win back others of the family whom the enemy hath filled with the strong drink of his delusions; and thus the work of God, to reclaim and redeem His own, proceedeth in the way of love at the hand of those whom by love He hath won over from the ranks of His enemy into the bosom of His fatherly love. Nor is there any other way whereby the work of God can proceed. He doth indeed make the wrath of man to praise Him; but it is the love of man which He maketh to serve Him. The faith of devils also doth make them tremble, because they know Him not as a Father, but as a Judge; but the faith of man doth make him love, because He in whom he believeth is nothing but love. Be it therefore fixed and settled in your hearts, O ye servants of the Lord, that ye must know God as a forgiving Father, and yourselves as His beloved and favoured children, ere ever you can do for Him one act of right profitable service. While a man is standing in doubt and dread of God, the darkness and dismay which He suffereth within his own heart, the sadness and the gloom, are all against God, denying and confessing Him not, telling of Him as the hard master and the stern judge, and not as a perfect Saviour from sin, and the most merciful Father of goodness to the sinner. He who serveth God in the bondage of the law is no witness of the Father and the Son, but, contrariwise, is a witness against them; and that man's toil and trouble, that man's sorrow and sadness, are no fellowship of Christ's suffering, who was a Son before He began to suffer; and being a Son volunteered to suffer, because He saw His Father suffered from the sinfulness and rebellion of His creatures. So if we would suffer with Christ, we must suffer generously, and not selfishly, for another's injuries, and not for our own in another's

cause, not in our own in wretchedness for another's sin, not in repinings over our own. Peace therefore towards God, through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, is the inlet to our Father's sorrow, and the beginning of our Father's service, and the continuance of it standeth in our freedom from sin ; for if we commit sin, then stay we the current of our Father's love to men, by the barrier of our own concern for ourselves. Instead of going out with the blessing, we have to go in for forgiveness ; instead of shining forth with joy and peace, we are darkened with remorse. Oh, God's work of expressing through us His yearning love over sinners is sadly prevented by our unholiness ; if we had the confidence of sons, and the obedience of sons, which Jesus had, the Father would fill us with the same mighty stream of pity, and compassion, and sorrow with which He filled Him. Oh, sin doth harden the heart and turn it to stone, and God can make no use of it until, by faith in the blood of Jesus, it be turned to a heart of flesh ; then taketh He it up into His service, and sheweth what flesh is capable of, even of containing the fulness of God's love, and pouring it out in streams of sorrow over His abject, perishing creatures. And God will have pity, before He will trust us with power, lest we should use His power for evil ends : we must descend into the lower parts of the earth with Jesus, before we can ascend with Him into the region of the Majesty on high ; we must have of the fellowship of His nothingness, before we can have the fellowship of His almightiness ; we must deny ourselves, before God will own us ; the creature must be out of sight, before the Creator can be seen ; the vessel must be exhibited as an earthen vessel, before the excellency of the power can be seen to be of God.

Now, if any one inquire how this self-abasement is to be attained, the answer is, It is done under the hand of Jesus, who did ever thus abase Himself from the throne of the Highest, from the bosom of the Father, to be the accursed man hanged on a tree. He did it ; the Son of God did it ; and to Him it appertaineth to do it for ever. This is to believe on the cross of Christ ; namely, to believe that Jesus, which is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, did for the end of sal-

vation, abase the everlasting and unchangeable dignity of His place unto the level of the world. It is the wonderfulest action that even God himself did ever do, shewing how low His love can stoop to save. And the Son of God did earn for Himself so excellent a name, did obtain the Father such acceptancy, that the Father has given Him power over all flesh to bring out these excellent virtues which are in it, whereby it did sustain the Son of God when bent on such a stupendous undertaking. It gave Him scope to suffer ; it gave Him room and range enough to shew the utmost compass of the love of God. Oh, what a creature is flesh ! how noble in its creation, how much more noble in its redemption ! how transcendently noble in its eternal glory ! Ah ! the Son of God hath indeed foiled Satan in that fall which he wrestled with flesh, and down, down, in the depths of mortality hath made it tell a tale of God, over which creation shall sing eternal anthems : the tale of God's love to the unloving, the tale of God's pathetic sorrow over the rebellious, the tale of God's purpose to save and to exalt the most worthless and ungrateful of His creatures, because He is good, because His mercy endureth for ever. Whoso therefore would re-echo the notes of mercy which filled the flesh of Jesus, must give himself into the hands of that Master of sorrow, to be attuned to His Father's mood. He must yield himself to the hand of the Divine minstrel, who will string his shattered harp, and breathe over it the Spirit of sorrow, the notes of the turtle wailing and dying of love. I say, Jesus must do it for us, and not we for ourselves ; by yielding, not by striving, have we this as every other heavenly gift. And the way whereby He prepareth us for such blessed service is by making us believe God's love to ourselves, which apprehendeth us for sons, all loathsome as we lie ; and, washing us at once in the blood of Jesus, doth lay us in the security and confidence of His own bosom, the nearest to Him of all creatures, however honourable ; more near to Him than any creature,—near to Him as His only-begotten Son. Which stupendous love, registered in every fibre of the heart, and working through all the regions of the mind, doth, as it were, give us the continual key-note from

which to start in the song of love, which He calleth for at our hands, in the hearing of angels and of men.

The Church shall never attain unto the fellowship of Christ's resurrection until she seek more unto the fellowship of His sufferings. The life of Jesus shall never be made manifest in our body, until we bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. The life of Jesus shall not be made manifest in our mortal flesh, until we that live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake. When we shall be able to say, "I through the law am dead to the law," we shall also be able to say, "I live unto God." When we shall be able to say, "I am crucified with Christ," we shall be able to add, "nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." The Lord waiteth till we shall honour the office of His Son, and crucify the flesh; and then He will quicken us by the life and power of the resurrection of Christ. We must seal into the death, before we can be sealed with the life of Jesus. These things are true, and nothing to be gainsaid. Let every brother weigh them well, and lay them to heart, and glorify the name of Jesus hanging on the cross, by a life of self-denial and mortification to the flesh, that they may glorify the name of Christ, who sitteth at the right hand of God.

We would now both shew the truth of the doctrine, laid down above, concerning the connexion between love and suffering, and a little guide into the practical details of the subject, by considering that delineation of love which the apostle Paul hath left upon record in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians, where, after having exhibited the manifestations of the Spirit, and the ministries of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Church, he doth shew forth the operations of the love of God in the soul of every believer, declaring that without these all gifts and ministries are profitless and vain. Now, it is marvellous to observe how almost every one of these operations of love is after the nature of suffering: "Love suffereth long, and is kind,"—not only suffereth the contradiction of sinners, but is kind to them all the while; not only suffereth persecution and peril and

death, but recompenseth them with blessing and prayers and well-doing ; not only suffereth, but suffereth long, being thereunto called, forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us, shewing us an example that we should follow His steps. A servant of the Lord should lay his account with continual trials while the world lasteth under its present prince, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience. Nor should he count it strange when he falleth into divers temptations ; it is our calling. Where should a man be found, but in his lawful calling? Next, "Love envieth not," but is contented with the lowest place, and meanest occupation ; remembering the example of Jesus, and the words which He spake, "Let the greatest of you be as the least, and the chiefest as he that doth serve." If we would not envy, we must be crucified to the world, and bear daily the reproaches of the foolish ones, who see nothing in man's life, but titles and honours and preferments, and riches and enjoyments of the flesh and of the carnal mind. From which if we would turn away, seeking after truth, righteousness, faith, and charity, then must we be content to be accounted fools and fanatics, and enthusiasts and madmen, which to bear, costeth no little suffering in the flesh, and from those whom we would wish to please. But to that suffering we must make up our minds, if we would be delivered from envying ; for, while there lurketh one worldly desire, or ambition in the heart, there is room for envy. Again, "Love vaunteth not herself," but glorieth in the Lord, being like Jesus meek and lowly, the friend of publicans and sinners ; willing rather to endure the contempt of others who contemn God, than to enjoy their approbation ; and for herself, being self-crucified, she hath no living self to uphold or to glory in. Jesus is her all in all ; Him she glorifieth, and she can endure no rival beside His throne. Again, "Love is not puffed up" with those gifts which the Spirit may divide to us, with those ministries wherein the Lord may set us ; because love teacheth us that these are not our own, but the Lord's goods intrusted to our stewardship, over which we watch, as those that have to give an account. Therefore are we not easily puffed up, because we are dead unto ourselves,

and alive from the dead unto the Lord Jesus Christ ; because we have nothing which we have not received, and, at the best, are but unprofitable servants ; because we are filled with humility, are burdened with the common sin of man, and lie low in pleadings and intercessions for all. Next, "Love does not behave itself unseemly," being full of chastity and modesty, and courtesy and comely majesty ; because the flesh, with its corruptions and lusts, is put to death ; the eye hath ceased from its adultery and its covetousness ; the hand from its theft, and the whole man from his evil propensities. Also we are filled with the welfare of others, and would do everything to please them for the use of edifying, avoiding even the appearance of evil, and carrying ourselves wisely both towards the brethren, and towards them that are without ; unto which operation of love to attain, a man must have ceased from his own will and from his own way, and conformed himself unto Jesus, who pleased Himself in nothing, as it is written, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." Again, "Love seeketh not her own," but the things of Christ, and the things whereby she may minister to the necessities of others ; being rich, she becometh poor, that through her poverty others may be made rich. She goeth about doing good, and seeking to bear the burden of others. Her own matters she leaveth unto God, whose work she wholly intendeth. Ah ! God hath already secured her in the most honourable place of heaven, and she would fain secure Him in His rightful inheritance of the earth. She is Christ's bondwoman, and what hath she to do with her own ? This prostration of self, this continual saying, "Not mine, but thine be done," is surely an excellent operation of love coming from perfect suffering in the flesh. It is the proving of that holy and perfect will of God, by being not conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewal of our minds. Ah me ! but this love is the cross of the flesh, and breaketh every bone of the natural man. Again, "Love is not easily provoked," being very patient, through the indwelling of the patience of Christ, who, "when He was reviled, reviled not again, but was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as the sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not

His mouth." You may provoke love, but it is not easy: you may wear out the long-suffering patience of God, but it is not easy; because His wrath is terrible, and if it be kindled but a little, the kings and judges of the earth do perish; but it is a strange work and a brief one, and maketh way for an eternity of composure and peace; strange to love is the mood of wrath, and short-lived when it cometh, for the sun may not go down upon our wrath. Again, "Love thinketh no evil," being herself devoid of evil, and purified in the regions of thought, wherein the subtle fowler plants a thousand snares. And what a deliverance it is to be free from suspicious, cruel, envious thoughts; to have the cloudy atmosphere of the mind purified, and the blue azure of heaven everywhere apparent! Surely love is to the mind what the heat of the sun is to the moisture of the atmosphere, licking it up and making it transparent as the air; what the light of the sun is to the birds which haunt the darkness of the night. "Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth," because she has no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but doth rather reprove them. A joy indeed she hath, but not in these evil things, places, and persons, which meet her everywhere, but in the truth, in Him whose name is Truth, in the ways of truth, in the word of God, and in the company of the saints, who love the truth, and speak the truth to one another. But oh! if iniquity give us not joy but sorrow, then how constant must our sorrow be; "sorrowing always," as saith the apostle, "and yet rejoicing:" for there is a truth in the midst of the error, and in the midst of the Babylon there is a church which is the pillar and ground of the truth; and these love is quick-sighted to discern, and over them she rejoiceth in hope, being assured God will accomplish every word which He hath spoken. Again, "she beareth all things" which the Lord is pleased to lay upon her, though, like her Lord, she would sink and fall under the load. She refuseth not to be burdened with the sin of men, nor doth she shrink from the sight of their sufferings, but bringeth them with intercessions to her Father's throne. She "believeth all things," crucifying sight and walking by faith, denied to the arguments of reason and

calculations of prudence, alive only to the faithful revelations of God. She "hopeth all things," and by hope is preserved from the depressions of sorrow ; for the joy that is set before her, enduring the cross, despising the shame. And finally, she "endureth all things" which her Lord endured, delighting to walk in His footsteps, and to bear His cross, knowing that as she is partaker of the suffering, so also of the joy.

Forasmuch, then, as the fellowship of Christ's sufferings is not otherwise to be attained than through the participation of His love, we ought with all diligence to seek after love, which is the Father's gift unto all men in Christ Jesus: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son." "We love him because he first loved us." "God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." This love runneth in the blood of Jesus, and is the life of God in flesh, which Jesus brought into flesh, and kept there, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, and which He continueth to pour into flesh by the anointing of the same Holy Ghost. "The love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given to us." Man's heart is a vessel constructed of God for containing and ministering His own love: the enemy got it, and filled it with his malice : Jesus cast the enemy out, and restored it to its proper occupation ; wherein He keepeth it, not only in His own person, but in all those who cleave unto Him with a living faith. This therefore is the sum of the matter,—that we study to maintain faith in Jesus, and continual oneness with Him ; through which will flow into us that love of God which springeth eternal in His bosom ; wherewith being filled we are in a case to sorrow. For as there is no suffering in a still-born child, and none in a dead man, but suffering presupposeth life ; even so there must be life of Jesus, which is life of God, in every one who would suffer with Jesus or with God. The resurrection-life of Jesus is that which, being strong in us, will beget His own abhorrence of sin and separateness from a sinful world, His own yearning over the sinner, sacrifice and intercession for him, labour of love, and patience of hope unto the end. The measure of Divine love standeth in this, that it did bring the

Life which was with the Father into flesh, to the end it might be offered unto the death for all flesh. In the continual sacrifice of the Divine life upon the altar of this passive flesh lieth the form and the amount of all suffering and sorrow; and therefore there must be a Divine life to suffer, as well as a passive flesh whereon to lay the quivering limbs of the new man full of the most sensitive love: for the old man hath no suffering in him, being dead as a stone to all Divine affections and sorrows. To know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, therefore, we must first know the power of His resurrection, raising us from the insensibility of death into the quick and strong sensibility of the Divine life, ever wounded, vexed, and grieved by the sad sights and sorrowful experiences of this wretched world. And with the suffering, thus endured, there is an imperturbable and inexhaustible joy, because in truth the substance of the Divine life is joy, and only joy: "With thee is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." Christ had fulness of joy when His soul was exceeding troubled: "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." In God there is nothing but the most self-sufficing enjoyment. The sorrow is not inbred, but resulteth from the misconduct and misery of those whom He made for the inheritance of that very joy, but who have plunged themselves into the depths of wretchedness; and for this it is that we also sorrow, when the mind of God abideth in us. Through the flesh we have the most perfect sympathy with the wretched blindness, darkness, and misery of men; through the Spirit we have the full participation of God's blessedness, whereto they as well as we are called: and so have we the one hand burning in the fires of Divine love, the other frozen in the icy coldness of nature; and between the two we are vexed and grieved very sore. The joy in the Spirit ever upholdeth the suffering in the flesh; and the suffering in the flesh ever driveth us home upon the joy which we have in the Spirit. For the joy that is set before us we endure the cross; by the fulness of the joy that is in us we rejoice in tribulation also. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace. These are great

depths, and to the natural man great contradictions, not otherwise to be reconciled than by the experience of the spiritual life. A very small part of the subject have I been able to open. I understand much more than I have expressed. May the Lord bless these words to the edification of many souls! Amen.

END OF VOL. IV.











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